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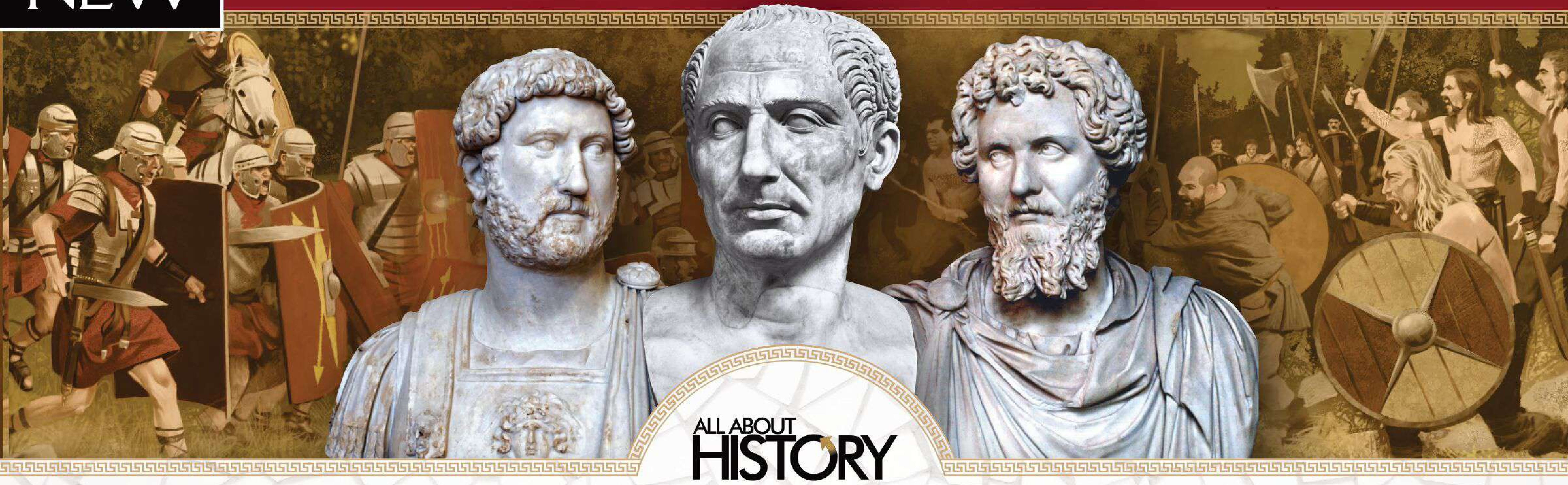

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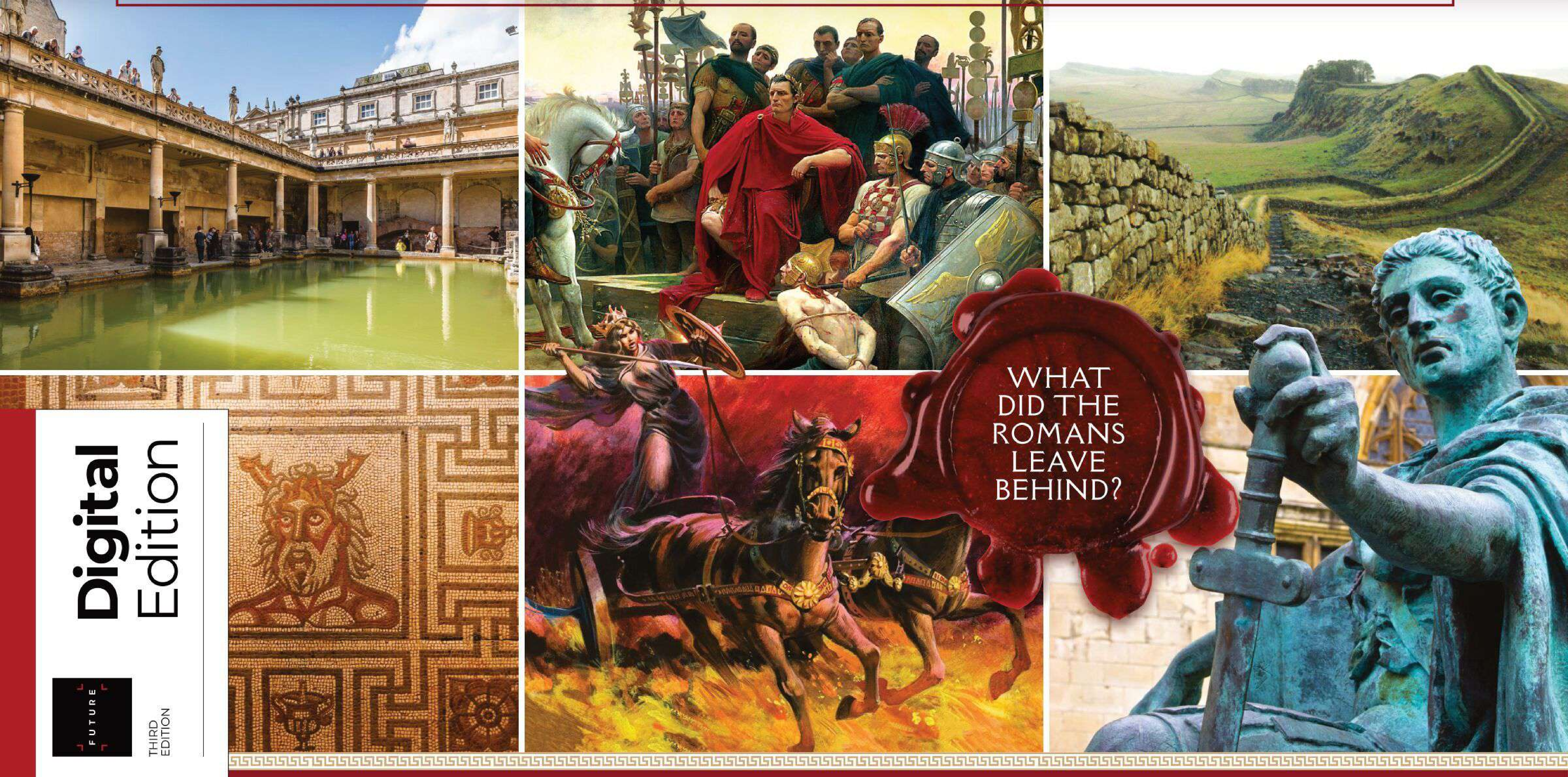
EXPLORE THE NORTHERN FRONTIER OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST EMPIRE



WHAT DID THE ROMANS LEAVE BEHIND?

Digital Edition

FUTURE

THIRD EDITION

WELCOME TO
ROMAN BRITAIN

In 43 CE, Roman legionaries set foot on British soil. It wasn't the first attempt – the Romans had tried twice before to take the island – but this time, the invasion was going to work. The legions battled their way through modern-day England, taking out the tribes who wouldn't willingly submit to Roman rule. As the soldiers made their way further north, the native Celts fought for their lives and their homeland, but the enemy was too strong. The Romans were here to stay.

In *Roman Britain*, uncover the fierce opposition to Rome's imperialist expansion, and find out what really happened when Boudica rebelled in 60 CE. Take a walk along Hadrian's Wall, the northernmost point of the entire Roman Empire, and meet the soldiers who served there. Discover how the invaders brought their gods and their culture with them, and learn what they left behind when Rome began to crumble…

FUTURE

ROMAN BRITAIN

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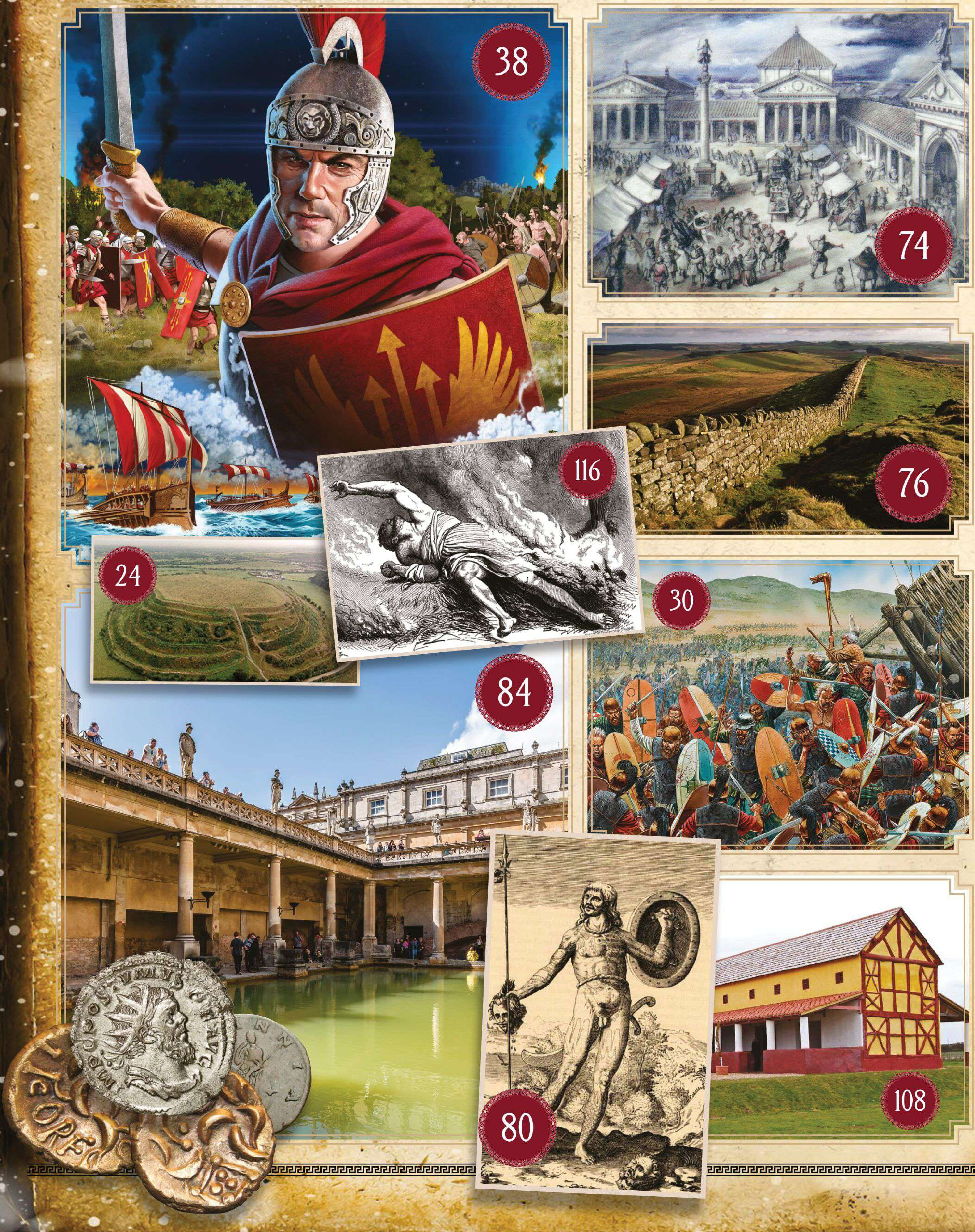
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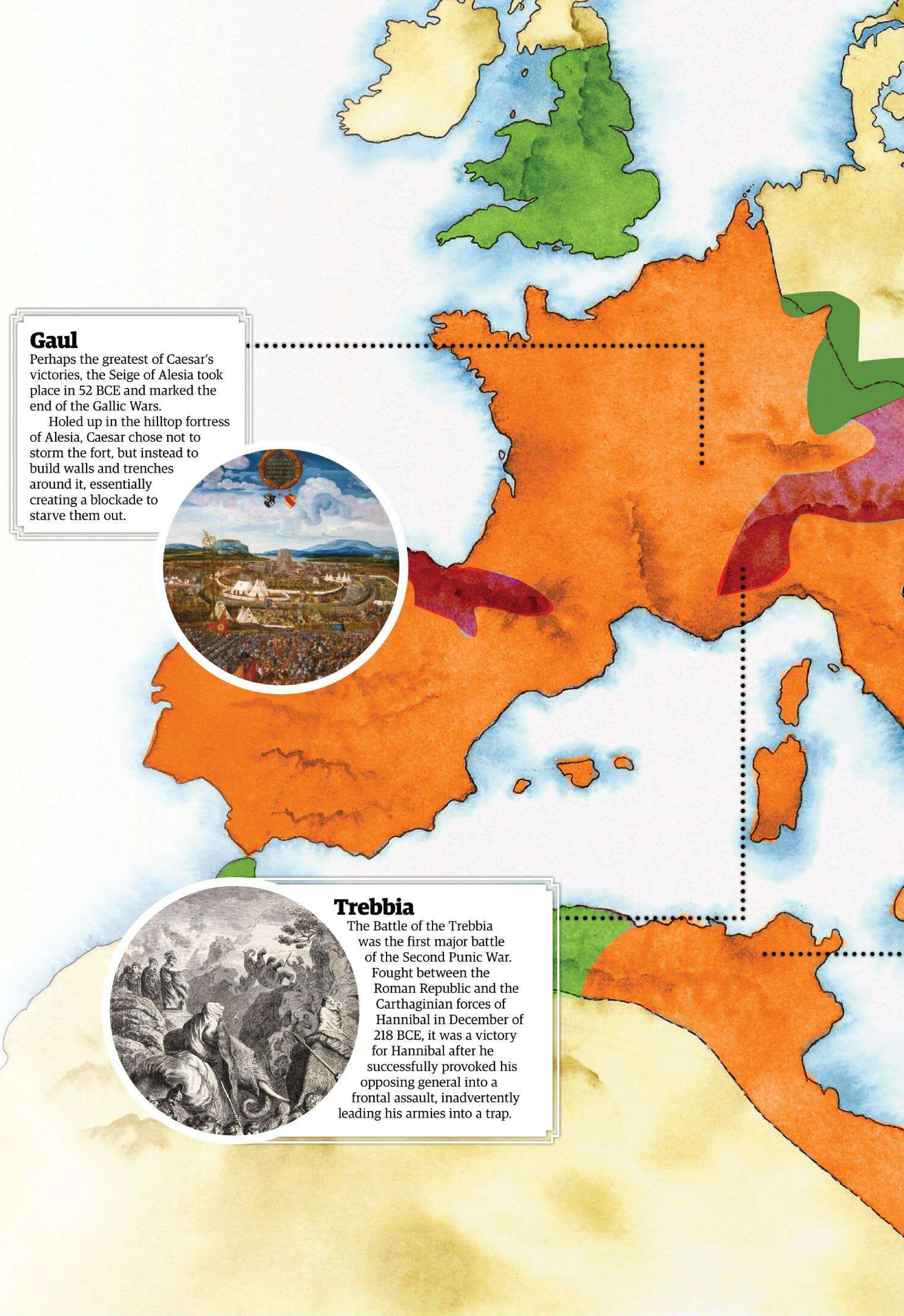
Expansion of the empire

How Rome came, saw and conquered: the rundown of all the territories Rome gained over time

5TH CENTURY BCE	ITALIAN PENINSULA
4TH CENTURY BCE	SUDAN
4TH CENTURY BCE	TUNISIA
4TH CENTURY BCE	MOROCCO
4TH CENTURY BCE	SOUTHERN FRANCE
4TH CENTURY BCE	SPAIN
1ST CENTURY BCE	NORTHERN FRANCE
1ST CENTURY BCE	GREECE
1ST CENTURY BCE	TURKEY
1ST CENTURY BCE	EGYPT
1ST CENTURY CE	BRITAIN
2ND CENTURY CE	DACIA (ROMANIA)
2ND CENTURY CE	ARMENIA
2ND CENTURY CE	THRACE (BULGARIA)

🟧	*Roman Republic territories up to the death of Caesar (44 BCE)*
🟥	*Additional Roman Empire territories up to the death of Augustus (14 CE)*
🟩	*Additional Roman Empire territories up to the death of Trajan (117 CE)*



Gaul

Perhaps the greatest of Caesar's victories, the Seige of Alesia took place in 52 BCE and marked the end of the Gallic Wars.

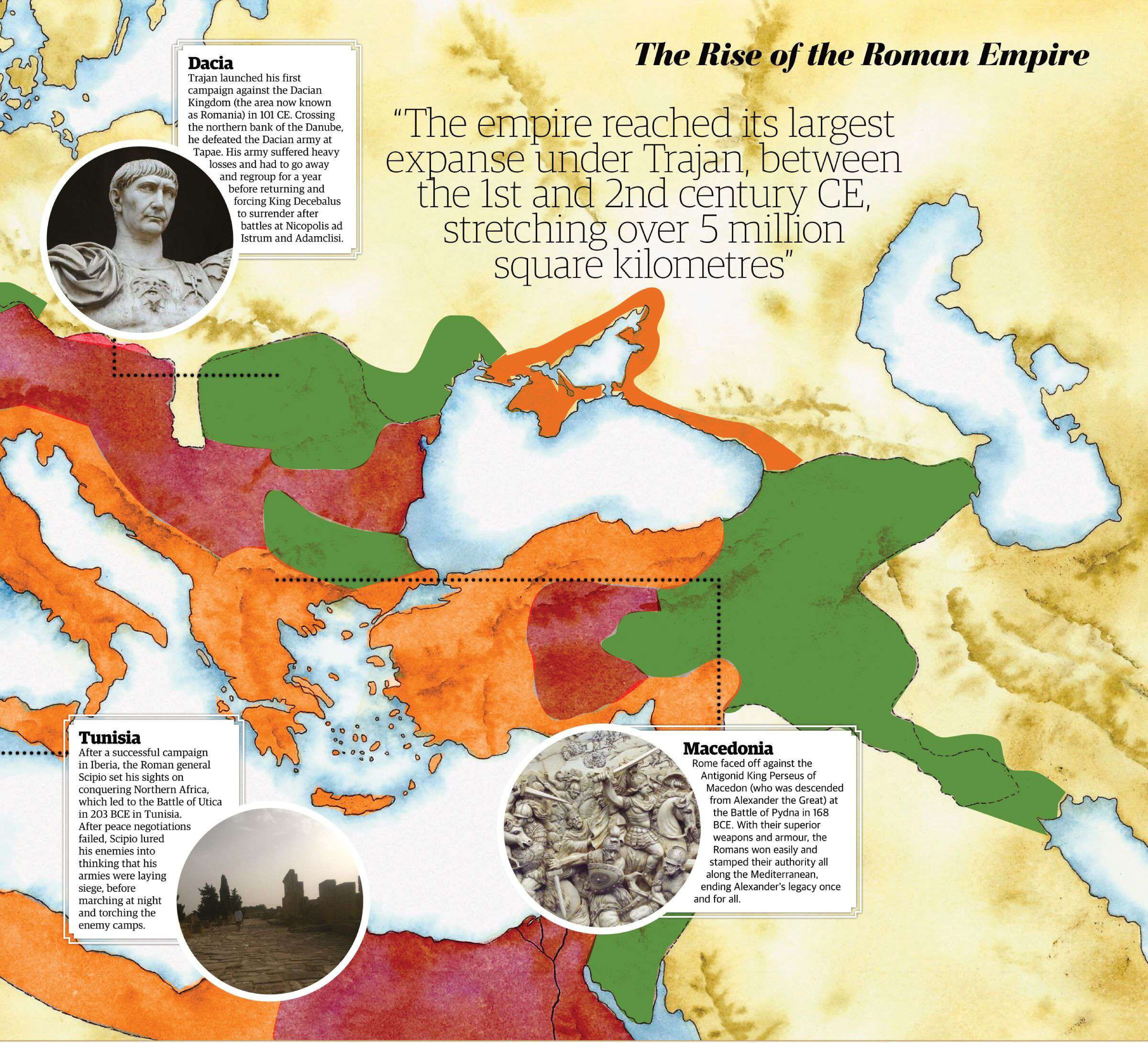
Holed up in the hilltop fortress of Alesia, Caesar chose not to storm the fort, but instead to build walls and trenches around it, essentially creating a blockade to starve them out.

Trebbia

The Battle of the Trebbia was the first major battle of the Second Punic War. Fought between the Roman Republic and the Carthaginian forces of Hannibal in December of 218 BCE, it was a victory for Hannibal after he successfully provoked his opposing general into a frontal assault, inadvertently leading his armies into a trap.

THE RISE OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

How Rome built its empire, negotiating or seizing the largest population of any unified political entity in the West



Dacia

Trajan launched his first campaign against the Dacian Kingdom (the area now known as Romania) in 101 CE. Crossing the northern bank of the Danube, he defeated the Dacian army at Tapae. His army suffered heavy losses and had to go away and regroup for a year before returning and forcing King Decebalus to surrender after battles at Nicopolis ad Istrum and Adamclisi.

> "The empire reached its largest expanse under Trajan, between the 1st and 2nd century CE, stretching over 5 million square kilometres"

Tunisia

After a successful campaign in Iberia, the Roman general Scipio set his sights on conquering Northern Africa, which led to the Battle of Utica in 203 BCE in Tunisia. After peace negotiations failed, Scipio lured his enemies into thinking that his armies were laying siege, before marching at night and torching the enemy camps.

Macedonia

Rome faced off against the Antigonid King Perseus of Macedon (who was descended from Alexander the Great) at the Battle of Pydna in 168 BCE. With their superior weapons and armour, the Romans won easily and stamped their authority all along the Mediterranean, ending Alexander's legacy once and for all.

The Roman Empire was one of the largest empires in history, comprising land throughout Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. However, expansion was mostly accomplished under the Republic (between 509 and 27 BCE), before the principate was actually established. During this period, Rome's control expanded from the immediate surroundings of the city to dominate most of the Mediterranean world through forming alliances or taking the territories by brute force. It wasn't long before the entire Italian Peninsula was under the thumb of the Republic, and by the following century its overwhelming sovereignity had widened all the way to include North Africa, Spain and Southern France (Gaul).

By the end of the 1st century BCE, the Republic had expanded to include all of modern-day France, Greece and most of the Eastern Mediterranean. However, by that point civil wars were breaking out due to internal struggles and the troubles culminated with the murder of Julius Caesar, after which the Republic began to evolve into an empire.

The exact date of the political transition is down to interpretation. Some put it at the point when Caesar was appointed "Dictator For Life" in 44 BCE, others when Mark Antony and Cleopatra were defeated at the Battle of Actium in 31 BCE. The most popular opinion, however, was that the Republic ended when Octavian was granted extraordinary powers by the Senate and adopted the prestigious title of Augustus in 27 BCE.

Although he gave birth to the empire, its dominance in terms of land mass didn't expand a great deal during the reign of Augustus, and when he died in 14 CE, his contribution had mainly been administrative. Augustus' regime catalogued people and places within his dominion and displayed a detailed map of the known world to the public.

The Roman Empire reached its largest expanse under Emperor Trajan, between the 1st to 2nd century CE, stretching out over 5 million square kilometres and covering the modern equivalent of 40 countries. At around 476 CE, the empire began to crumble. Although the eastern half continued to rule for another thousand years, the Roman Empire struggled to defend its borders and maintain its political grip on the Western world.

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THE LEGEND OF ROME

From its humble beginnings as a small kingdom of warring fiefdoms, to one of history's most imposing superpowers, Rome was a nation for the ages

Today, Rome is a beautiful tourist attraction more likely to play host to camera-toting travellers than barbarian hordes, but in the ages of the ancient world it was the epicentre of civilisation. The crown jewel of a nation that assumed every form – kingdom, republic and empire – a realm so powerful it changed the face of history forever. In the name of Rome and its ever-changing governments, it redefined the principles and engineering of warfare, revolutionised modern infrastructure and ushered in the beginning of the Middle Ages.

And like any great superpower, it carved its borders across the face of the world. From the cold shores of Britannia to the warm sands of Palestine and Egypt, Rome created for itself an empire that was a sight to behold, but one that invited attack at every juncture. The ancient world was not a pleasant place – full of plague, storms and warring tribes from every corner of the wild – but it was still a canvas upon which Rome instilled the principles of its own special form of civilisation.

It rose from humble beginnings, forming from the gens, or clans, of Italy, united under a new king with the ambitious vision for a greater state. It was from the fires of that origin that some of the most iconic Roman concepts were forged, not least of which were the very beginnings of the Senate; the democratic voice of the people that spent the next few eras battling the rulers that would come and go at Rome's helm.

As a kingdom, Rome began to fashion itself as a capital to be proud of; the pillars and grand designs of the Greeks and the Etruscans informing an architectural flair that would find itself in everything from municipal buildings to the roads it laid across the realm. The folly of kings soon led Rome to take a new form, forged for a new age – the Roman Republic. A shining beacon of democracy built on the back of a military the world had never seen before – organised, disciplined and hardened in the name of conflict and invasion. The legions of Rome became the hammer that conquered the known world, but they would also bring the nation to the brink of destruction in a crisis to follow.

Democracy brought Rome greatness, but also left it open to the schemes of powerful men and the actions of Julius Caesar transformed the nation into a new state, one focused on conquest anew. An empire, with an emperor at its highest seat of office and a desire to reshape in his image. As the Roman Empire, Rome became stronger than ever, but for all its innovations and advancements in engineering (many of which would be lost to the Dark Ages to come), Rome would attempt to rule a world that was changing rapidly. And so its fate would be sealed – one more great empire falling in place of another.

> The Roman Empire technically only refers to a relatively short period in the history of Ancient Rome – it existed as a kingdom and a republic before that

THE ELEMENTS OF ANCIENT ROME

From religion and the arts to the use of slaves and infrastructure, Ancient Rome was a unique society that operated on its own terms

In many ways, Ancient Rome was well ahead of its time. Despite all of the ancient trappings, the great minds of Italy were always busy looking upwards and onwards. For the Senate and Rome's many revolving leaders, extending borders of the realm was of paramount importance. Soldiers were the true currency of progress, and conquering new lands and absorbing their people was the fuel needed to power that machine. That cycle swelled Rome's legions and the state began expanding at a terrifying rate.

Alongside this expansion, the engineers of the time revolutionised the facilities of the age. Vast aqueducts brought running water to the people, and freshly paved roads (curved to drain off rainwater, no less) linked the realm together much like a concrete nervous system. Upon these roads, Rome's trade flourished and its most precious commodity, the slaves, helped the Roman economy turn (in much the same way as it would in other empires in the centuries to come).

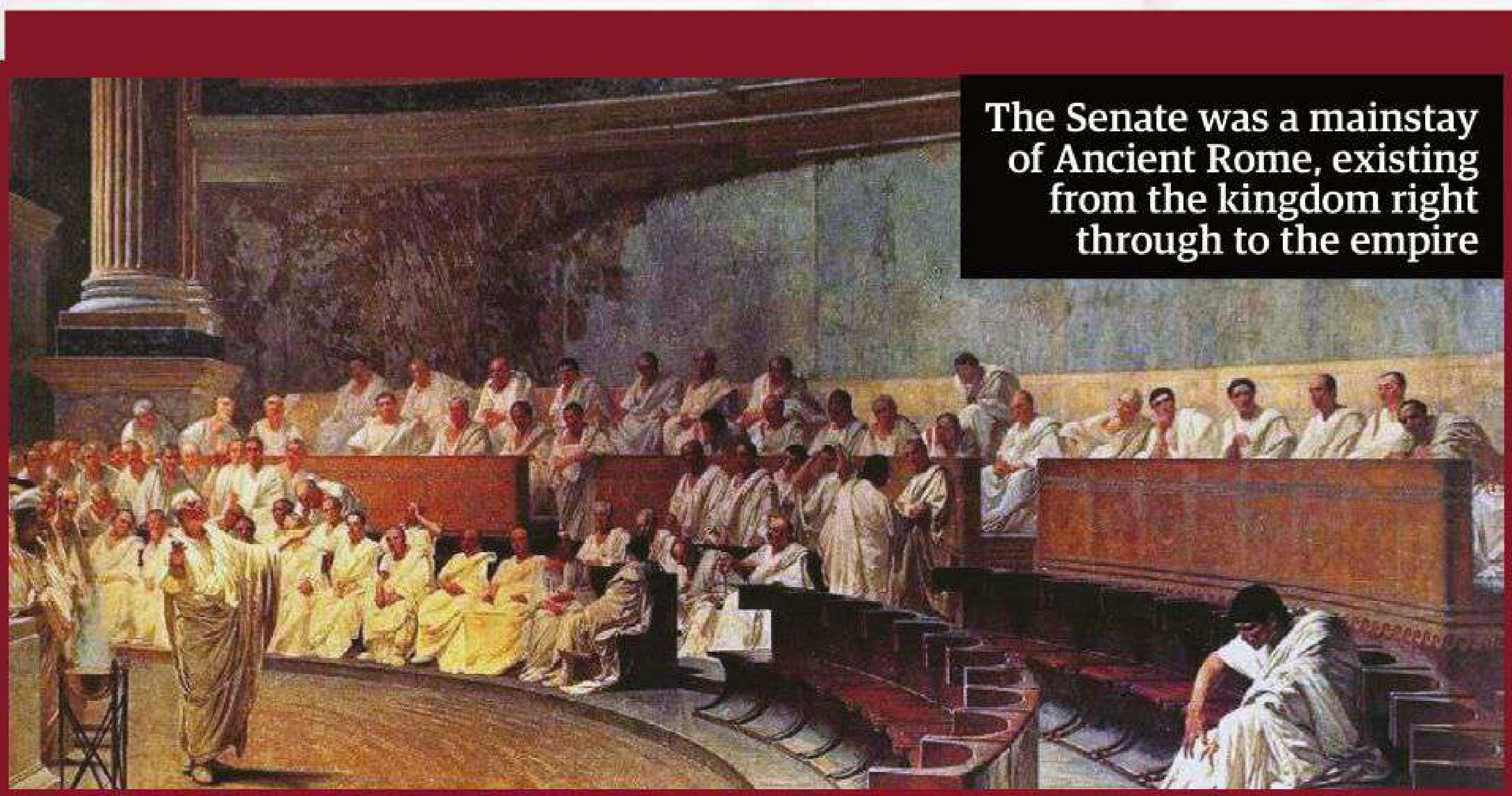
The slave trade segued into the hedonistic fabric of Roman society, fuelling a national love for bloodsports. The people adored their arts, enjoying everything from theatre to works of literature. It was a time of expression, where the real world mingled seamlessly with an almost tribalistic embrace of the gods and prayer.

> "Soldiers were the true currency of progress, and conquering new lands was the fuel needed to power that machine"

RELIGION

The Romans had a practical view of religion. It informed almost every facet of their lives not because they were particularly pious, but because superstitions and rituals were an everyday part of life. The Romans saw the work of the gods in everything they did, and the role of enacting those rituals fed back into society's patriarchal structure. It was the role of the head of the household to perform a day's rituals, making offerings to Jupiter or Saturn. The same idea applied to the military, with prayers made to Mars on the eve of battle.

Roman religion took many of its elements from external sources. Concepts from Greek practices and Etruscan myth became intertwined with Roman rituals, with prayer and sacrifice more of an inherent part of life than a religious element. Religion was even represented in government – the official oversight of rites to counteract bad omens and attract prosperity for a new emperor fell at the feet of the Pontifical College.



The Senate was a mainstay of Ancient Rome, existing from the kingdom right through to the empire

GOVERNMENT

Ancient Rome conjures images of men in white robes arguing the issues of the day in the Roman Forum, and emperors leading armies with one hand while holding off assassination attempts with the other. In reality, the Romans lived their lives under many different forms of government, but the Senate endured through them all. Formed in 753 BCE with the creation of the Roman Kingdom, the Senate was the product of a deeply patriarchal society. The oldest and wisest men from influential families oversaw the creation of laws, conduct trials and debate on behalf of the people.

Under the guise of the republic, the Roman dream of a true democratic governance flourished. The Senate rose to its highest level of power, and through its ranks rose plebeians (regular citizens). Following the rise of the Triumvirate (where three men vied for power in government) and the eventual empire, Romans were in fealty to a single man yet again.

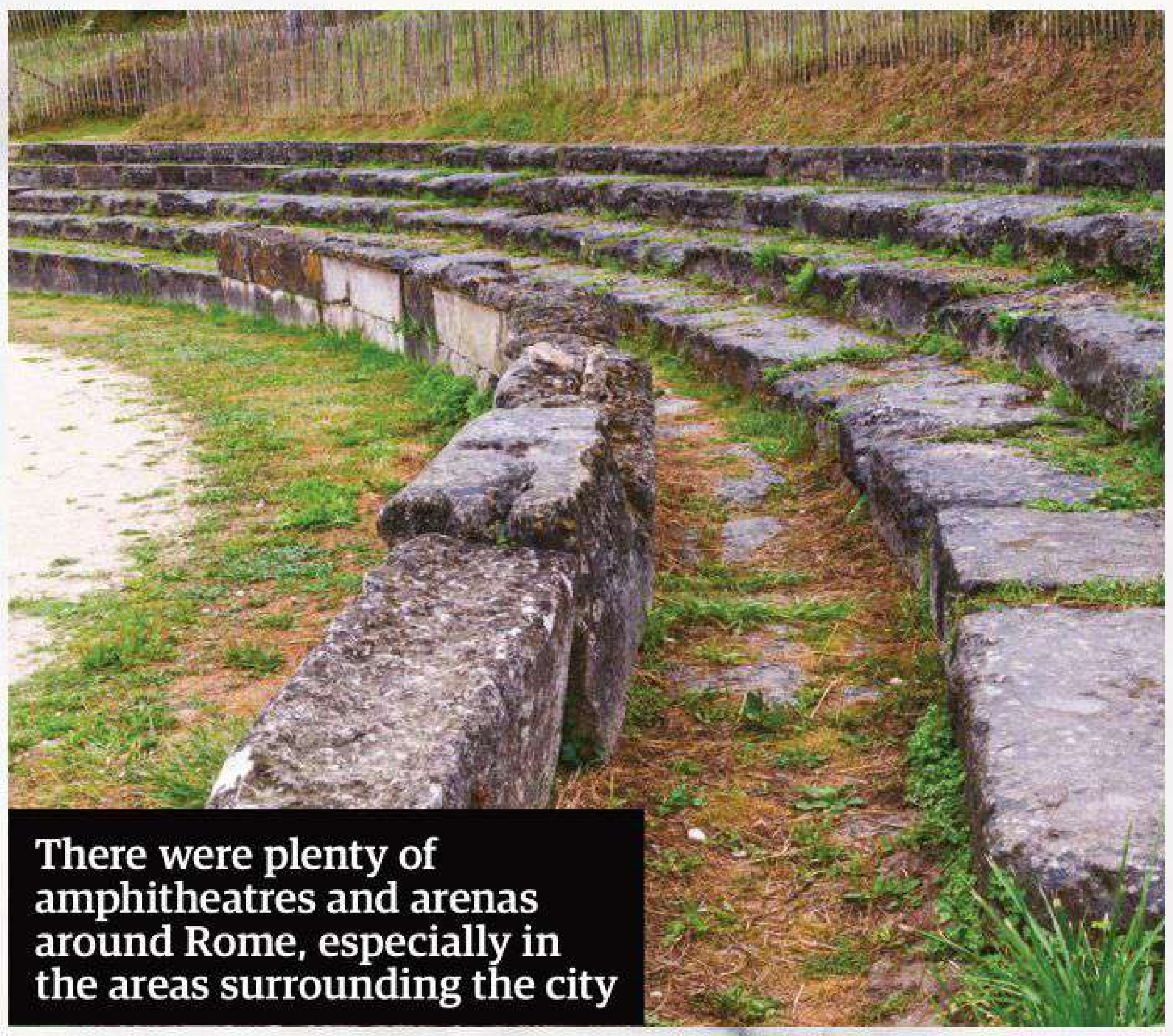
One of the greatest Roman achievements were its network of roads, some of which are still used today

INFRASTRUCTURE

For the Romans, maintaining a solid infrastructure for its people was just as important as any military campaign. Rome – the crowning jewel of the kingdom, the republic and the empire – was built as the example for the rest of the realm and the Roman government began constructing buildings out of elaborately carved stone, the artistic flair living large in the Roman architecture.

The Romans couldn't be expected to live a lavish lifestyle in their own filth, so they did what any self-respecting and enterprising nation would do: they built vast aqueducts that redirected underground sources of fresh water all the way back to Rome. These underground ceramic pipes and overground lanes (which often doubled as bridges) used nothing more than gravity to bring this life-giving resource into the capital.

And that's not to mention the breathtaking network of roads that were built to replace the dirt roads and simple lanes the Etruscans had built in the centuries before. With cement and broken stones, the Romans laid Rome at the heart of a vast network that even stretched as far as Britannia.



There were plenty of amphitheatres and arenas around Rome, especially in the areas surrounding the city

ENTERTAINMENT

The Romans liked to celebrate and often built arenas and amphitheatres. The Colosseum (sometimes known as the Flavian Amphitheatre) was built between 70 CE and 80 CE and proved to be Rome's grandest entertainment centre. It could seat around 50,000 spectators and even had a giant canvas canopy that could be erected above it should the baking Italian weather prove too much.

The Colosseum gives us an insight into gladiatorial combat. It was a national favourite, with everything from disgraced soldiers to well-muscled slaves eviscerating one another in the name of entertainment. Great battles were often re-enacted, with professional fighters brought in to ensure the history books were adhered to in the arena.

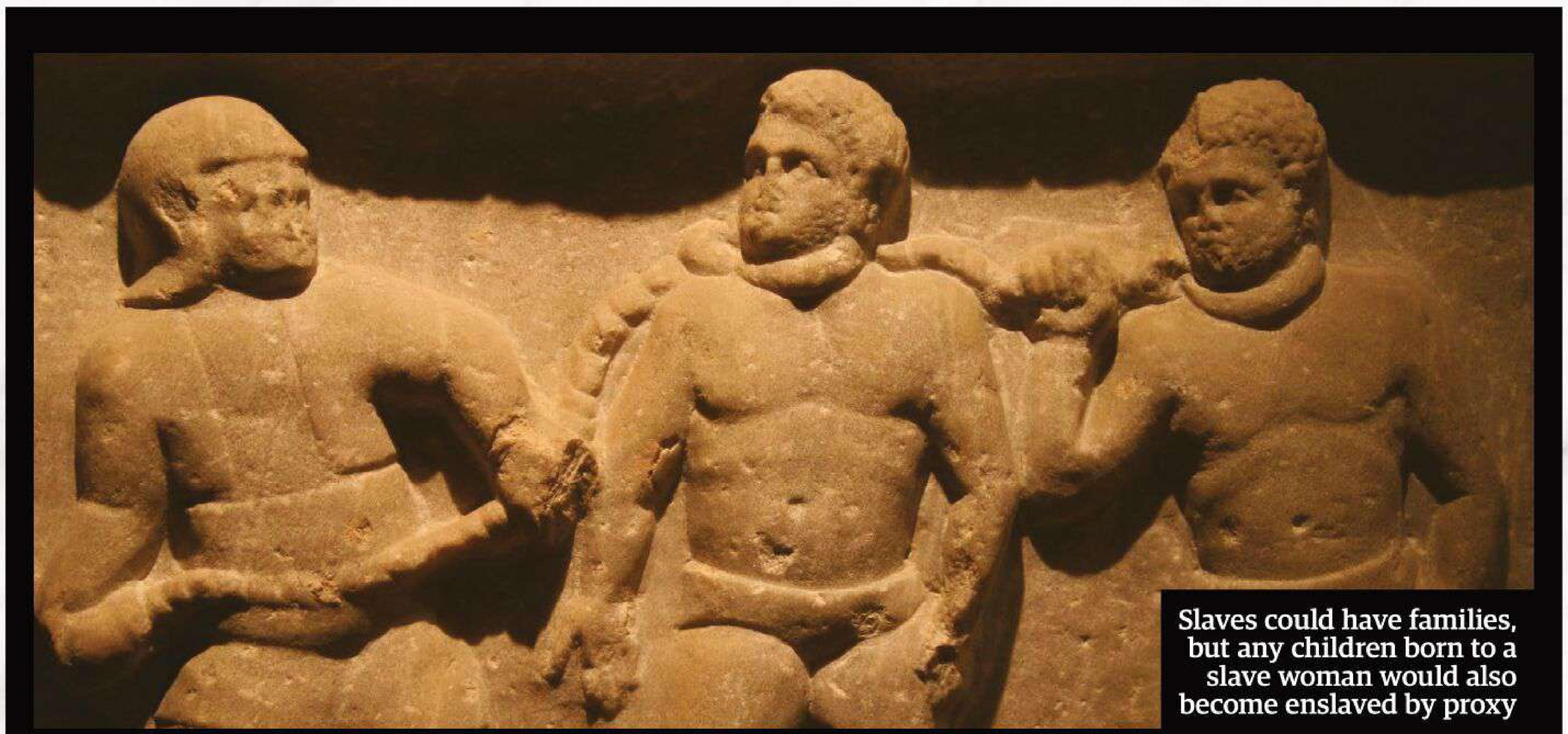
Chariot racing was another popular source of entertainment and its results could often turn just as bloody should a chariot crash. Violence was the means by which Rome had become a superpower, so it only seemed fitting its own people would gain an insatiable bloodlust when it came to how it kept itself entertained.

MILITARY

To the Romans, the armies formed a vital part of its expansion and continued safety. A force so powerful it dominated the Western world for over 1,000 years, it's an example of organisation and discipline that remains one of history's most fearsome forces. The Roman armies believed themselves descended from Mars himself, the god of war, and they took that sense of immortality into battle and it made them a fearsome sight to behold.

The continued maintenance of a military permeated every aspect of Roman society. It informed the increasing populus, with women actively encouraged to have many children in order to increase the chance of producing boys. Young men were expected to join the armies and serve, while elders with any experience of leading men were expected to join the legions and do their duty in the name of Rome.

What set the Romans apart from the many barbarians they encountered was their ironclad sense of discipline. Soldiers were drilled constantly in everything from marching formations to shield walls and Roman generals inspected each element of warfare – camps, weapons and tactics were under constant inspection and it made the Roman war machine legendary.



Slaves could have families, but any children born to a slave woman would also become enslaved by proxy

SLAVERY

To own slaves, which could be bought in marketplaces across Rome and throughout the realm, was a sign of status and power among the high-ranking families. Young boys or men often proved the most expensive, since they could be put to so many different tasks. Slaves came mostly from conquered lands and with the military in a near-constant state of expansion during the republic, Rome was awash with a regular flow of souls.

The figures surrounding the number of slaves in Rome at any one given time remains sketchy, but it's believed that at the height of the Empire slaves represented around 25 per cent of the population. It's hard to tell how many slaves a wealthy family could have, but it's thought the number ran into the hundreds.

The assumption that every slave lived a destitute life is one of many inaccurate facts surrounding the Roman slave trade. Slaves were an expensive investment and were often fed, clothed and treated with care. Those with a particular skill, such as cooks, were also highly prized and often lived comfortable lives in a household.

THE ARTS

The Romans were a very expressive people and we can see that in the sheer breadth of mosaics, sculptures, potteries and architecture they produced. At its core, Roman art was a melting pot of other cultures and influences – the Greeks, with their love of pillared architecture and white stone statues, became a major influence. As did the Etruscans, the people that preceded the Romans, with their love of wall painting and bronze statues.

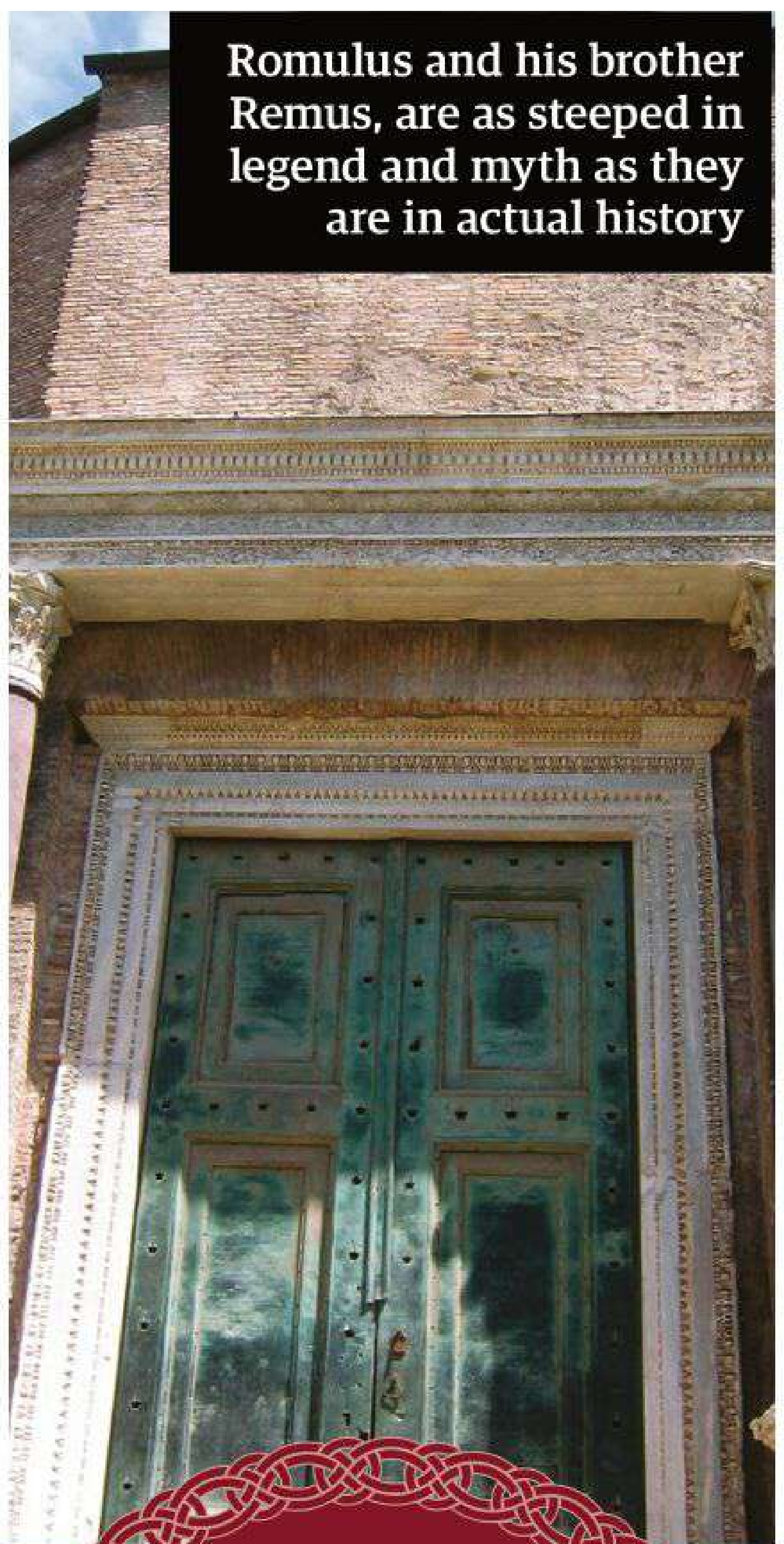
During the republic, art became a way to express one's position. Paintings and wall carvings of military successes were commissioned by the state and positioned around the city, while wealthy men had their likenesses immortalised in a bust. Most chose to have their features aged – this was to present a man who had given his life to support the republic. Roman art was often a representation of status, especially in the Imperial era where the "classical"style (Greek style) was re-embraced as the emperors attempted to reconnect with Rome's past.

THE ROMAN KINGDOM 753 BCE – 509 BCE

Rome is founded/ Romulus becomes king

753 BCE

Once a series of warring tribes and clans, the strongest among them are united underneath the warrior general Romulus. He installs himself as king and forms the very first incarnation of the Senate. The eldest members from the most powerful and influential gentes (clans) are chosen, Italy's deeply patriarchal makeup placing a great deal of importance on the wisdom of its older male members. Around 100 members are chosen by Romulus, and the Senate begins by taking care of the day-to-day running of the kingdom. Together, the very first laws of the land are written and the first standing armies formed.

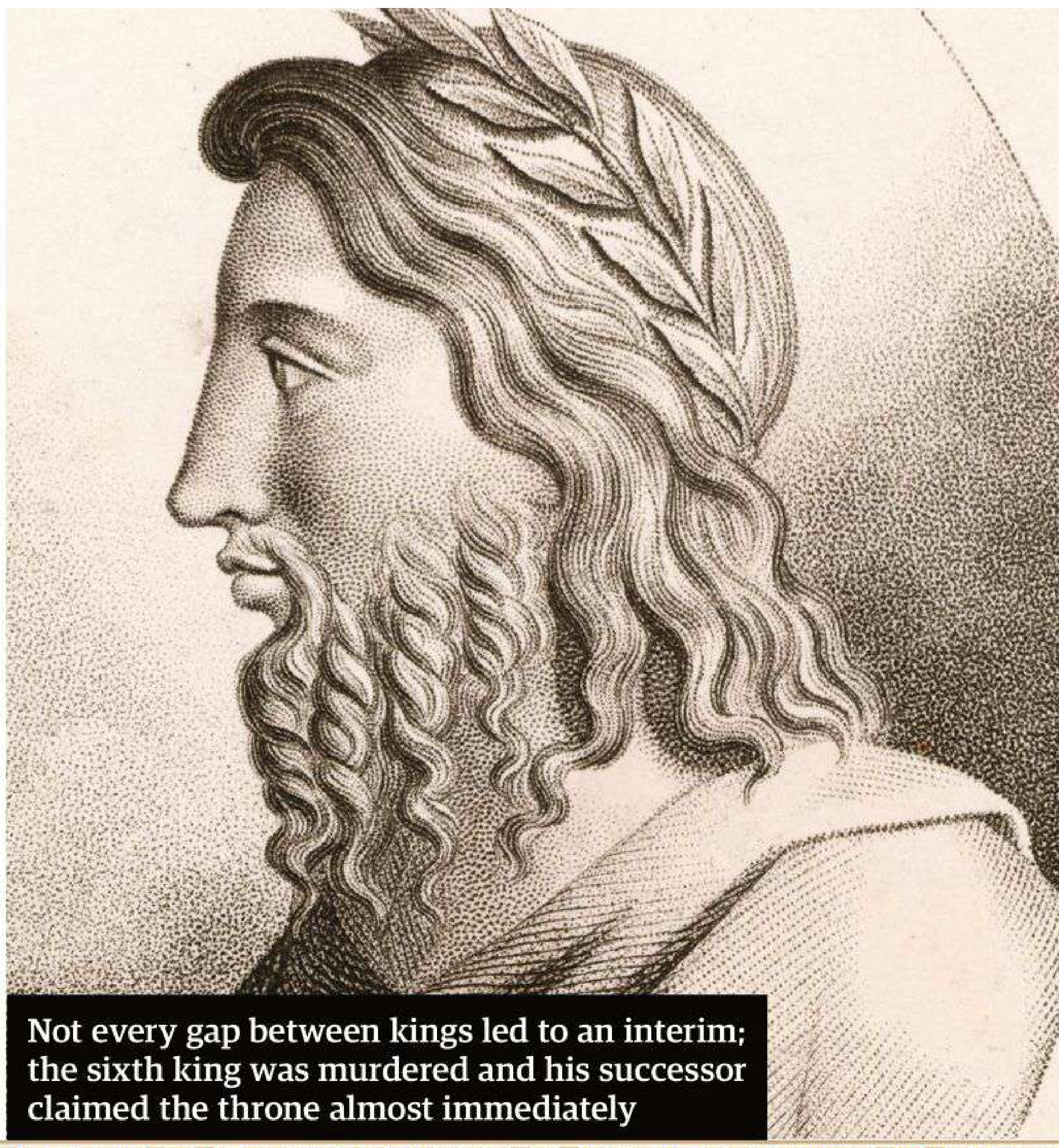


Romulus and his brother Remus, are as steeped in legend and myth as they are in actual history

The interim begins

716 BCE

Following the apparent "death" of Romulus, by order of the Senate, Rome enters an interregnum. This is a period of year or less where the traditional form of government simply does not exist, where one king has died but another has yet to be determined. The democratic principles of the Roman Kingdom state that only the Senate or a similar body has the power to make a king, so over a period of a year, ten different men rule the kingdom one after the other. This provides the Senate with the information it needs to select one of them as the next king.



Not every gap between kings led to an interim; the sixth king was murdered and his successor claimed the throne almost immediately

The Roman style of architecture lives on in the 18th-century neoclassical style that can be seen to this day

753 BCE 716 BCE 715 BCE 673 BCE 667 BCE 642 BCE 617 BCE

Romulus passes away
Around 716 BCE, Romulus mysteriously disappears during a storm. Some legends say he was murdered, but the reality is that the kingdom no longer has a king.
716 BCE

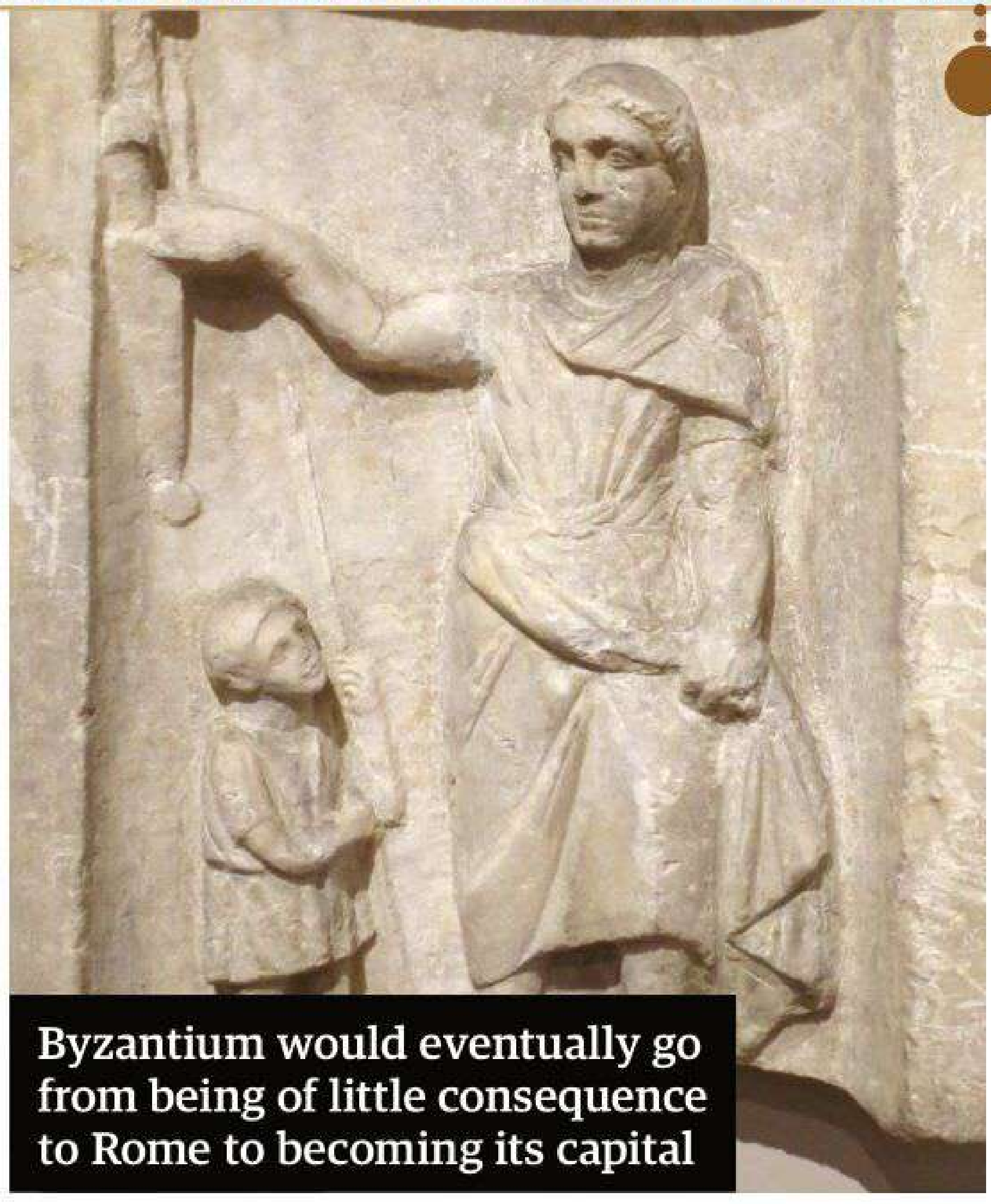
Numa Pompilius is elected king
With the interregnum now over, the Senate swears Sabine noble Numa Pompilius in as king. According to Roman historian Plutarch, Pompilius was born on the day of Rome's founding.
715 BCE

Tullus Hostilius becomes king
After a short interregnum, the candidate Tullus Hostilius is selected as king. Unlike his predecessor, Hostilius is a monarch more interested in conquest than peace.
673 BCE

Numa Pompilius passes away
Following a reign that saw many of Rome's religious institutions founded, including many of its temples, Pompilius dies.
673 BCE

Tullus Hostilius passes away
With a reign that sees Rome's borders expand like never before, the warlike Tullus Hostilius dies. His reign is likened to that of Romulus.
642 BCE

Ancus Marcius passes away
The fourth legendary king of the Romans, who helped reaffirm Numa Pompilius' work on Rome's religious infrastructure, dies.'
617 BCE

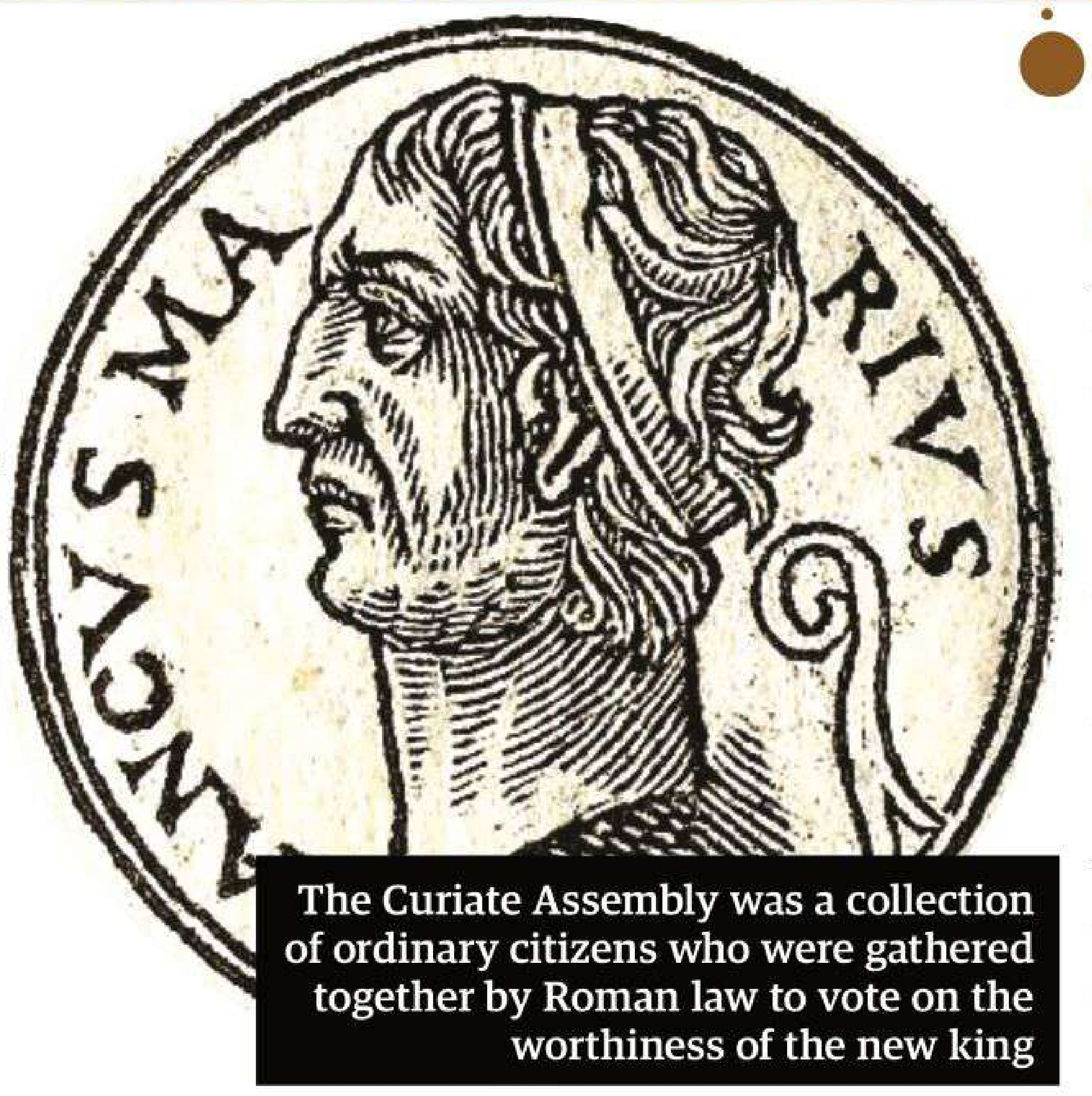


Byzantium would eventually go from being of little consequence to Rome to becoming its capital

Byzantium is founded

667 BCE

Around 667 BCE, the first roots of Byzantium are sown; a nation that will go on to be a foe, and an eventual conqueror of Rome. According to legend the city was founded by Byzas, who sailed from a city-state near Athens called Megara. With its position at the only entrance to the Black Sea, Byzantium would grow into a powerful nation fuelled by its steady trade.



The Curiate Assembly was a collection of ordinary citizens who were gathered together by Roman law to vote on the worthiness of the new king

Curiate Assembly elects Ancus Marcius

642 BCE

As with many kings who ruled in the Regal era, an interim period takes place between Hostilius and his successor. In between the election of the new king, an interrex is established (meaning a regent of sorts is appointed to look after the kingdom). The Senate selects suitable candidates before the people of Rome vote for who they want to rule them. The legislative group that appoints the new leader, Ancus Marcius, is known as the Curiate Assembly.

The Forum's central building is constructed

600 BCE

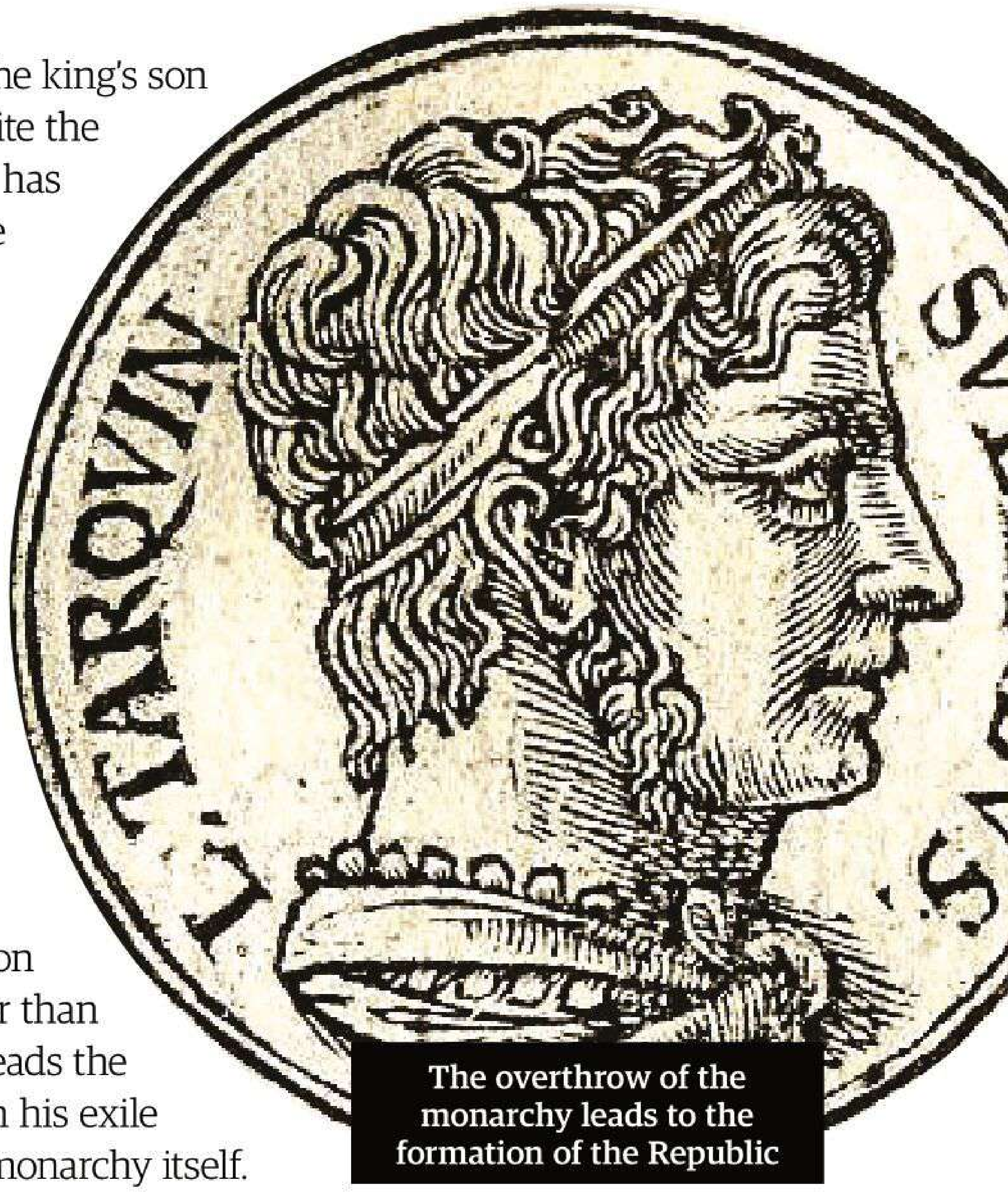
Perhaps the most important structure in Rome's history, the Forum becomes the home of the Senate and many of the state's important legislative decisions. It is under Lucius Tarquinius Priscus' reign that construction on the Forum is finished. Each of the previous kings had made some pilgrimage in this area, from draining it of water to the building of simple temples. Priscus' contribution is to have the main rectangular building constructed and the entire plaza paved. The Forum becomes a symbol of Rome's democratic heartbeat. More contributions will be made to it over the course of history.

The Roman Forum is still standing today and remains one of the city's most iconic structures

The Roman monarchy is overthrown

509 BCE

The rape of Lucretia by the king's son provides the spark to ignite the political powder keg that has been filling for years. The people and the Senate have grown increasingly uncomfortable with the actions of the king, Lucius Tarquinius Superbus, and his tyrannical rule. His obsession with architecture and building has largely exhausted the royal coffers and his foolish choice of military campaigns (based more on elevating his status rather than bettering the kingdom) leads the people to riot, resulting in his exile and the abolition of the monarchy itself.



The overthrow of the monarchy leads to the formation of the Republic

Oldest Latin inscriptions
The very earliest examples of written Latin date back to around this time. It's possible that this is when the Romans began actively recording their laws.
600 BCE

The Cloaca Maxima is built
Under the direction of Priscus, the first true Roman sewer is built beneath the centre of Rome. More primitive versions had been attempted, but this is the first true version.
578 BCE

Tullius builds city walls
In the first example of a Roman leader actively working to protect the city from foes, Tullius begins constructing walled defences around Rome.
550 BCE

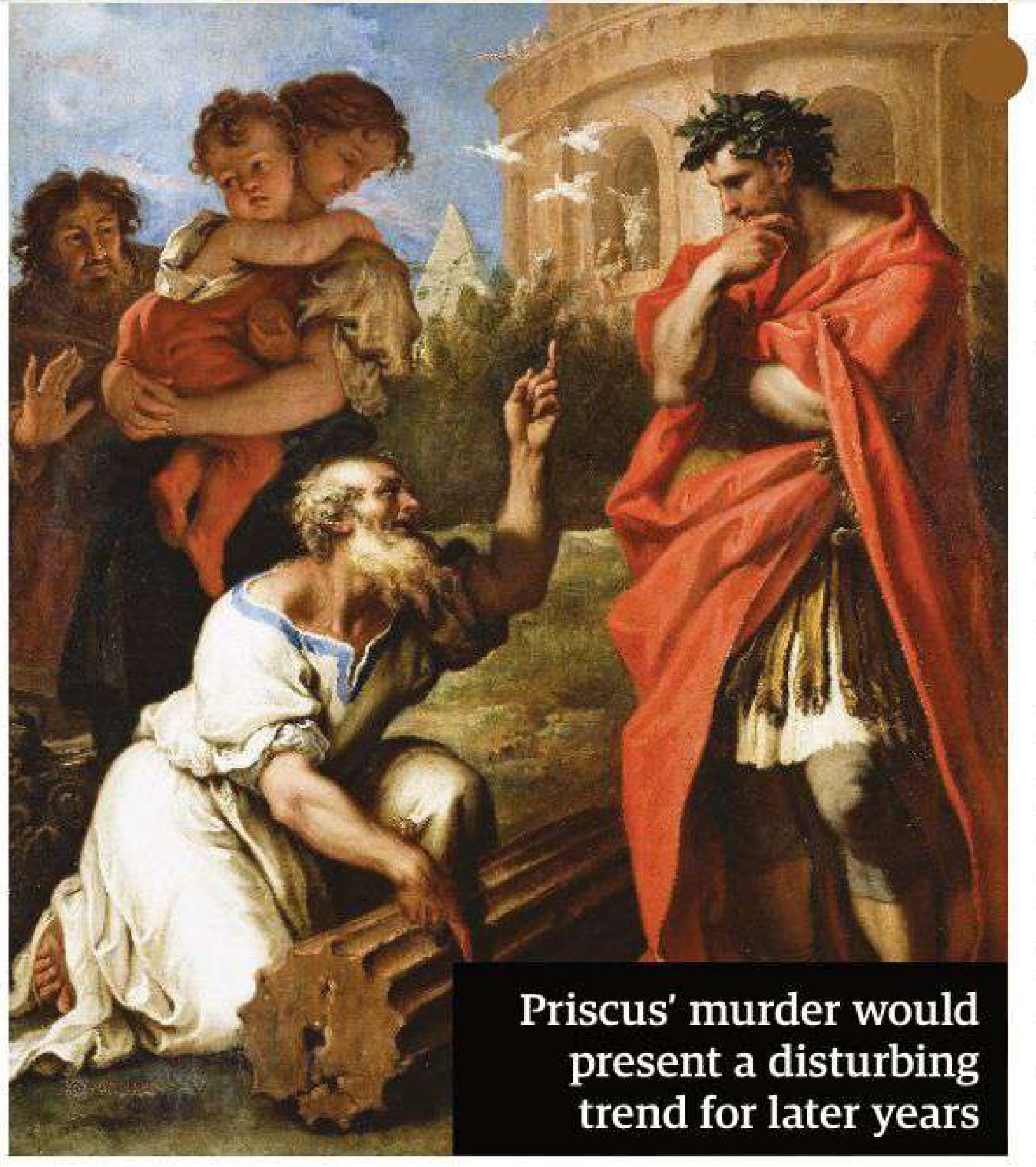
The raping of Lucretia led her to take her own life

616 BCE · 600BC · 579 BCE · 578 BCE · 575 BCE · 550 BCE · 535 BCE · 509 BCE

Lucius Tarquinius Priscus is elected
The fifth king of the Regal era, once again elected by the people, is found in the ambitious politician Lucius Tarquinius Priscus.
616 BCE

Servius Tullius becomes king
Following a period of time as regent, the Senate determines him a suitable candidate and elects him as the sixth king (and the second of Etruscan descent).
575 BCE

Superbus' son rapes a patrician
With Superbus already a deeply unpopular king known for his tyrannical rule, the news that his son Sextus has raped the patrician Lucretia is the final act that sends the kingdom into turmoil.
509 BCE

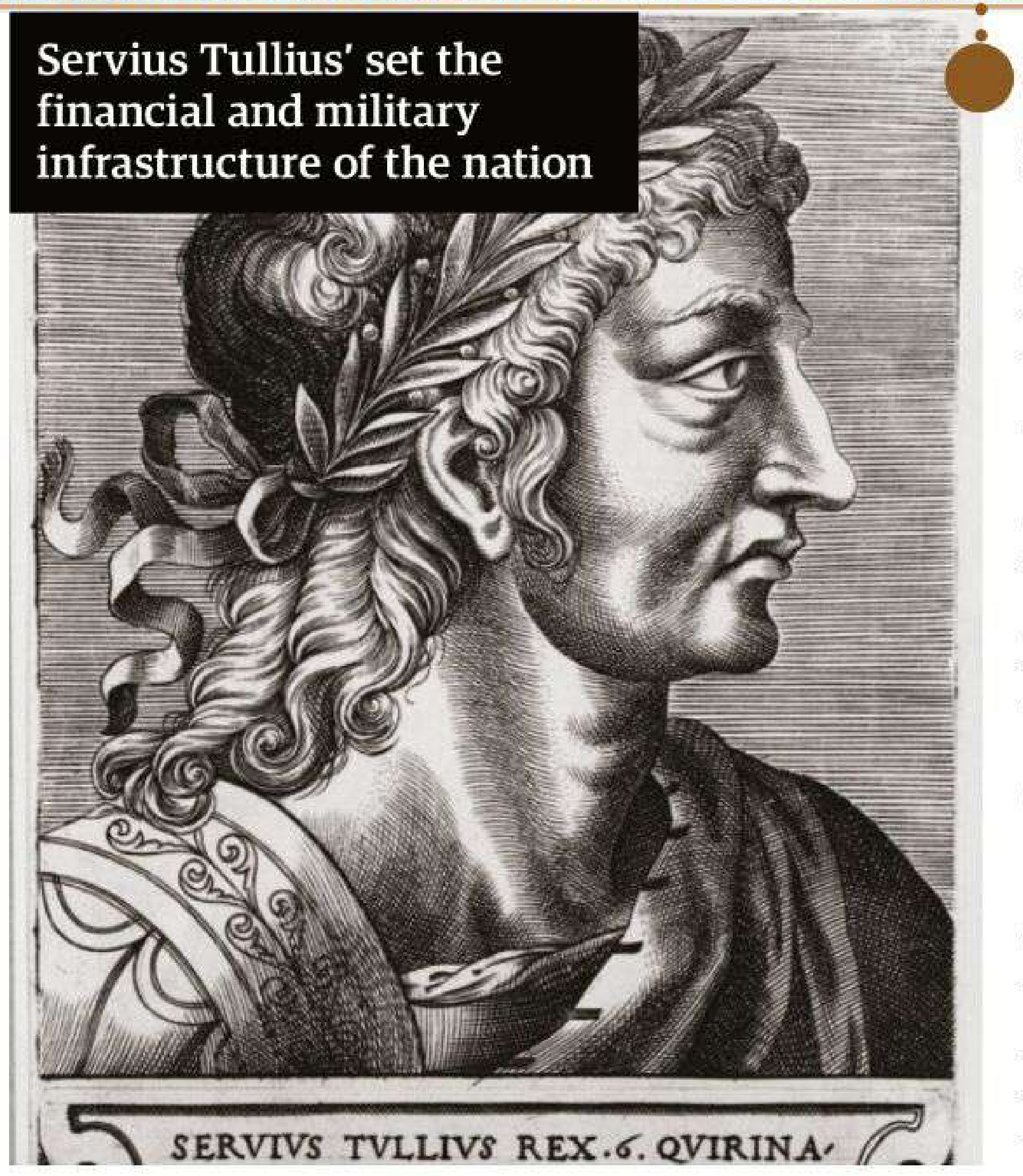


Priscus' murder would present a disturbing trend for later years

Priscus dies in a riot

579 BCE

In the first example of a Roman leader being murdered, Lucius Tarquinius Priscus dies during a riot organised by the son of the previous leader, Ancus Marcius. According to legend, the sons of Ancus Marcius believe the throne should have passed to them so they organise a riot among the people and strike Priscus over the head in the chaos. It's said Priscus' wife finds her husband wounded but not dead, and uses the time to name the Etruscan Servius Tullius as regent.



Servius Tullius' set the financial and military infrastructure of the nation

Servius Tullius is assassinated

535 BCE

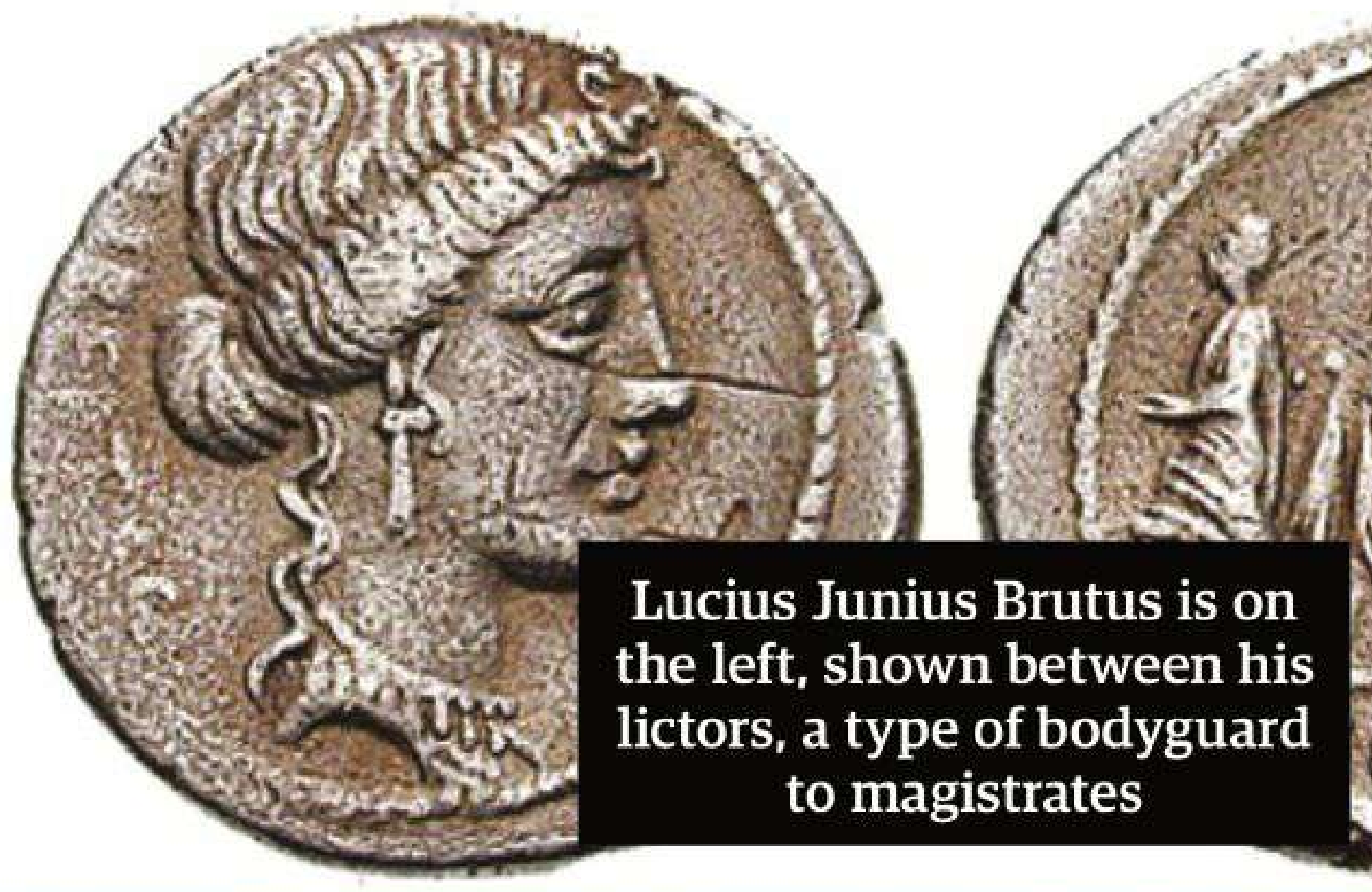
In another example of a disturbing trend in Roman succession, the king Servius Tullius is assassinated after 44 years of rule by his own daughter Tullia and her husband Tarquinius Superbus. Tullius had been a popular king, orchestrating a number of reforms. Superbus convinces the Senate to elect him king regardless and he becomes the seventh (and final) king of Rome, beginning one of the least popular reigns.

THE ROMAN REPUBLIC 509 BCE – 27 BCE

Roman Republic established

509 BCE

Following the overthrow of the monarchy and the exile of Lucius Tarquinius Superbus, the Senate establishes a new republic. In this new form, two leaders will rule cooperatively as consuls, elected for a single year each. With the formation of the Roman Republic, new powers are granted to the Senate and to the Plebeian Council, giving the people more power and influence over the laws that govern their home. It is decreed that Rome will never again recognise a king of Rome and subsequently elects Lucius Junius Brutus and Lucius Tarquinius Collatinus as its first joint consuls.

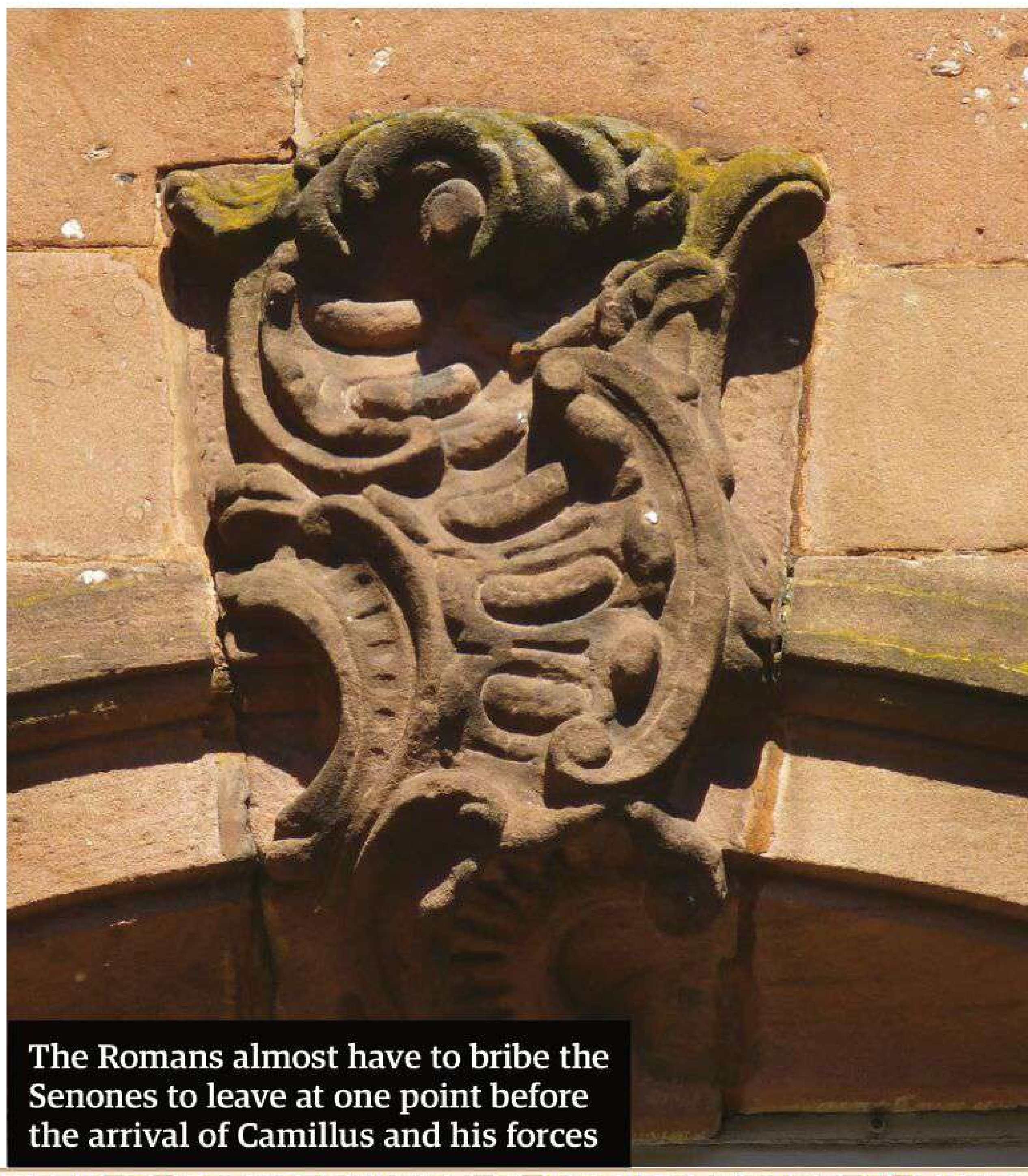


Lucius Junius Brutus is on the left, shown between his lictors, a type of bodyguard to magistrates

Senones sack Rome

390 BCE

In 390 BCE, Rome suffers its worst domestic disaster as the Senones reach and sack the city. On what is believed to be 18 July, the Romans march to meet the forces of the Senones, a large Gallic tribe that has invaded northern Italy. Despite their usual successes against the barbarians, the Romans are almost completely routed, leaving the path to Rome open for the Senones. The Senones find a city largely undefended, and therefore proceed to murder many of its elders, burn buildings to the ground and loot everything they can. Eventually, a Roman general called Camillus arrives with a relief force and destroys the Senones.



The Romans almost have to bribe the Senones to leave at one point before the arrival of Camillus and his forces

Battle of Silva Arsia
Republican forces meet those loyal to the deposed and exiled king at the Battle of Silva Arsia. Superbus' forces are defeated, but Lucius Junius Brutus is killed in battle.
509 BCE

Plebeian Council given new powers
As further evidence of Rome's growing sense of democracy, the Plebeian Council (formerly known as the Curiate Assembly) is granted the power to help make Roman laws.
449 BCE

Marriage between patricians and plebeians legalised
In another move created to foster the growing sense of equality between the high-ranking patricians and the normal plebeians, marriage between the two is legalised.
445 BCE

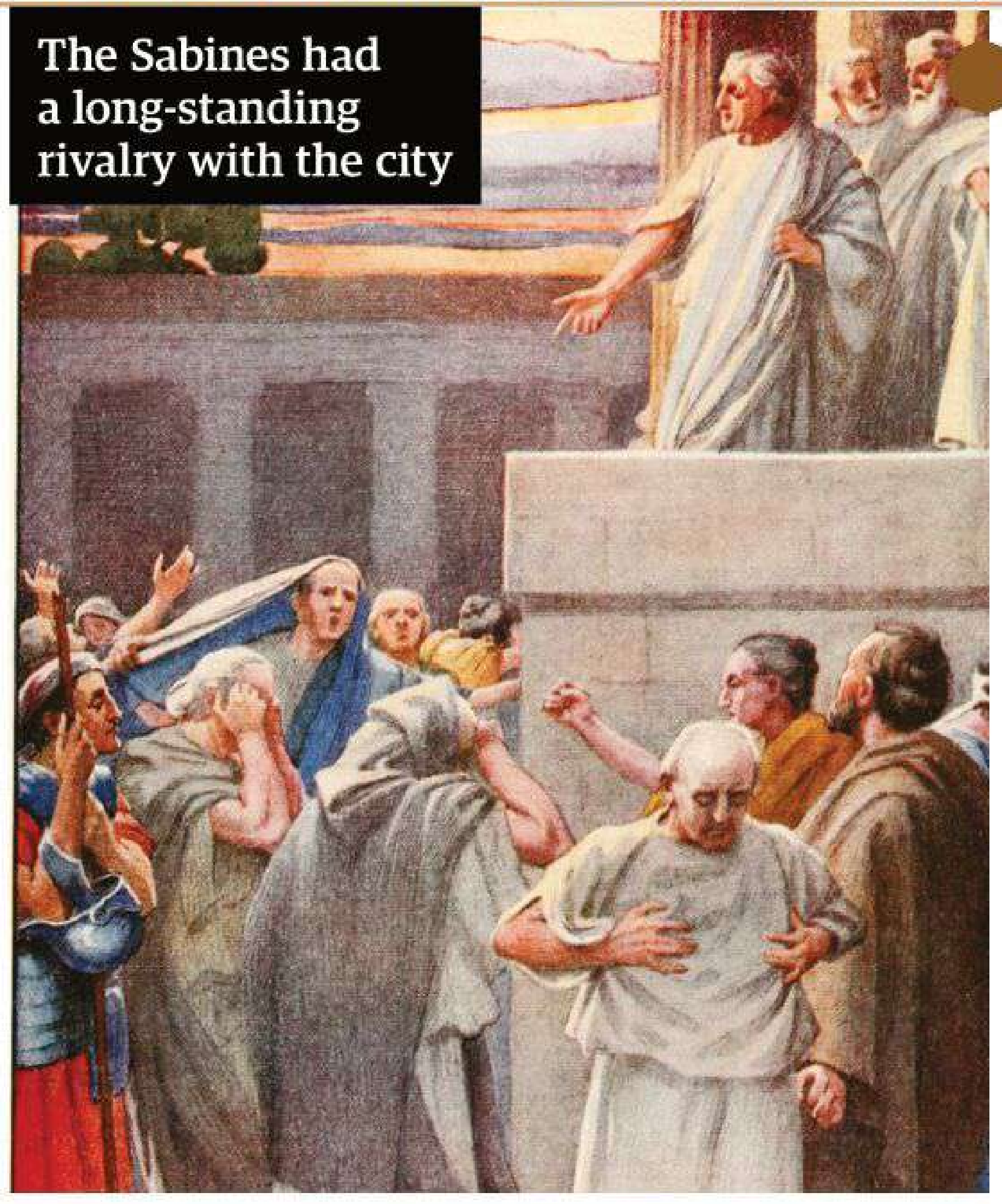
Three consular tribunes established
The office of the Tribuni militum consulari potestate is established. It's a set of three councils who will hold the power of the consuls in order to settle a power struggle between plebeians and patricians.
443 BCE

Roman soldiers earn a wage
For the first time in the history of Rome, soldiers are finally granted and paid a standing wage. This is due to the wealth brought in by the army's growing list of conquests and new lands.
396 BCE

First plebeian praetor elected
Despite the political struggles between the patricians and the plebeians, the very first plebeian praetor is elected into office.
337 BCE

Roman census is conducted
In and around 293 BCE, the Office of the Censor conducts an official census that shows the population of Rome has swelled to around 300,000 people.
293 BCE

509 BCE · 501 BCE · 449 BCE · 445 BCE · 443 BCE · 396 BCE · 390 BCE · 337 BCE · 293 BCE



The Sabines had a long-standing rivalry with the city

Senate passes dictator law

501 BCE

Despite the realm's difficult past with a single man holding too much power, the Senate decides emergency laws are needed to grant temporary ultimate power to an individual in the event of a crisis. This is known as the senatus consultum. With the threat of a Sabine invasion looming, Titus Lartius and Postumus Cominius Auruncus select the former as dictator.

The loss was a substantial one for the Gauls with around 40,000 killed and another 10,000 taken as prisoners to be sold into slavery

Rome halts a Gallic invasion

225 BCE

The Battle of Telamon in 225 BCE halts a potentially disastrous Gallic invasion. Rome had formed a peace with a handful of the Gallic tribes to the north of Italy's borders, but a new alliance of Gauls seemingly ignore this and begin moving troops into northern Italy with their eye on Rome. Roman forces under the command of consuls Gaius Atilius Regulus and Lucius Aemilius Papus march to Telamon and defeat the Gauls, extending Roman influence.

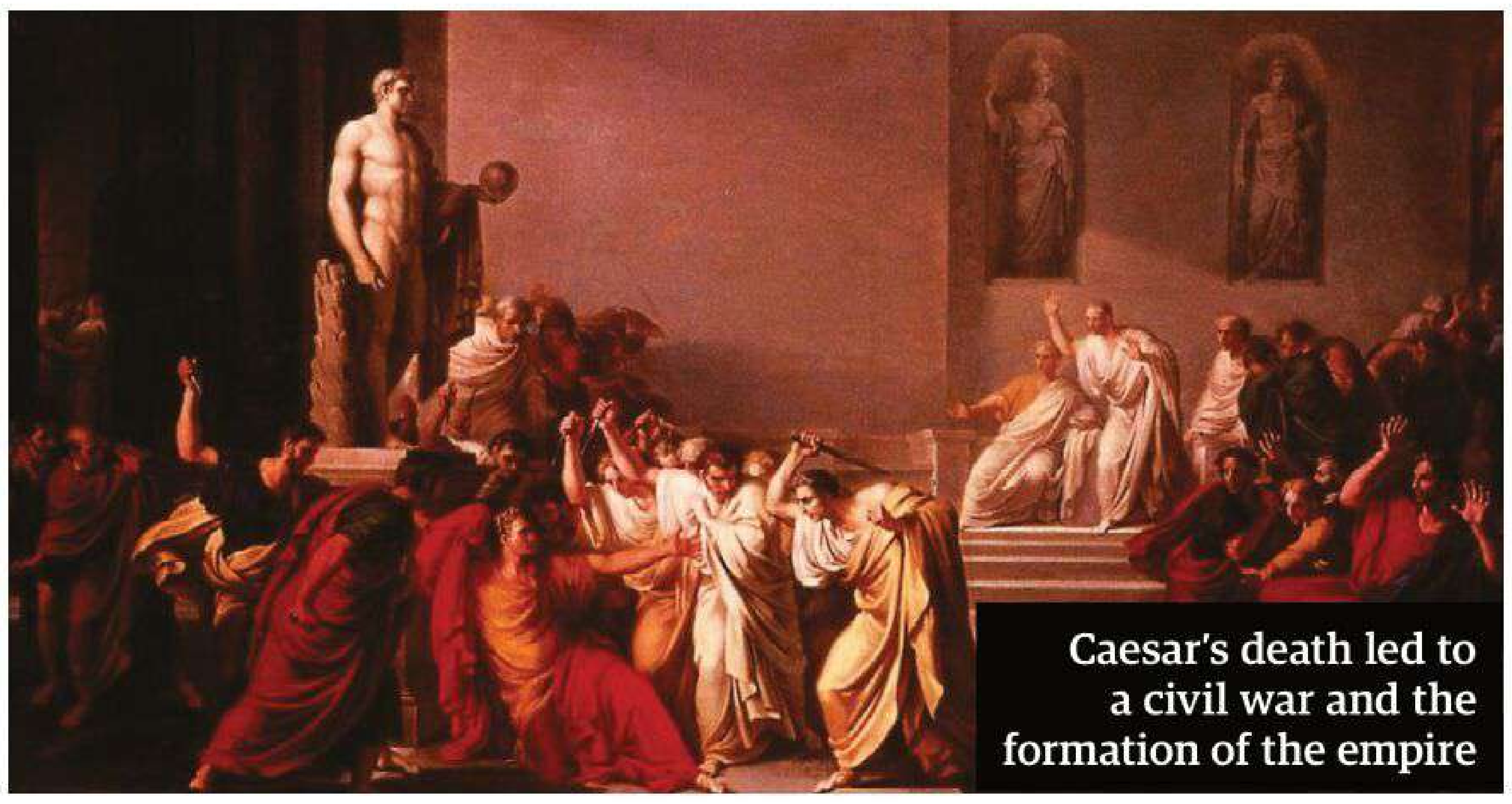
Battle of Arausio

105 BCE

The Battle of Arausio represents one of Rome's worst military defeats, and marks a turning point in the relationship between consuls. It also leads to many important reforms. The battle begins when a large Gallic tribe, the Cimbri, start migrating through Gaul, which causes an imbalance in the hierarchy of the tribes. With the Cimbri now growing in number, two armies under the command of consul Quintus Servilius Caepio and consul Gnaeus Mallius Maximus arrive to meet them. However, tactical disagreements between the two leaders have disastrous results with over 100,000 Roman soldiers dying.

The defeat at Arausio was a wake-up call for Rome, and led to serious reforms

© Karl Hammer



Caesar's death led to a civil war and the formation of the empire

Julius Caesar is assassinated

44 BCE

In the build-up to his assassination, Julius Caesar had risen from consul and member of the First Triumvirate to the most powerful seat in the land. He was not, as is sometimes incorrectly assumed, an emperor, but a dictator who was voted into that position by the Senate in 49 BCE and then again in 45 BCE. The Senate passes a vote making him dictator perpetuo, a role that made many senators who had not voted in his favour fearful that Caesar would install himself as king. On the Ides of March, a conspiracy is put into motion that sees Caesar betrayed by his allies and stabbed to death in the Theatre of Pompey.

Province of Macedonia established
After a series of long wars with the tribes of Macedonia, the lands are eventually absorbed into the republic and made a province of Rome.
146 BCE

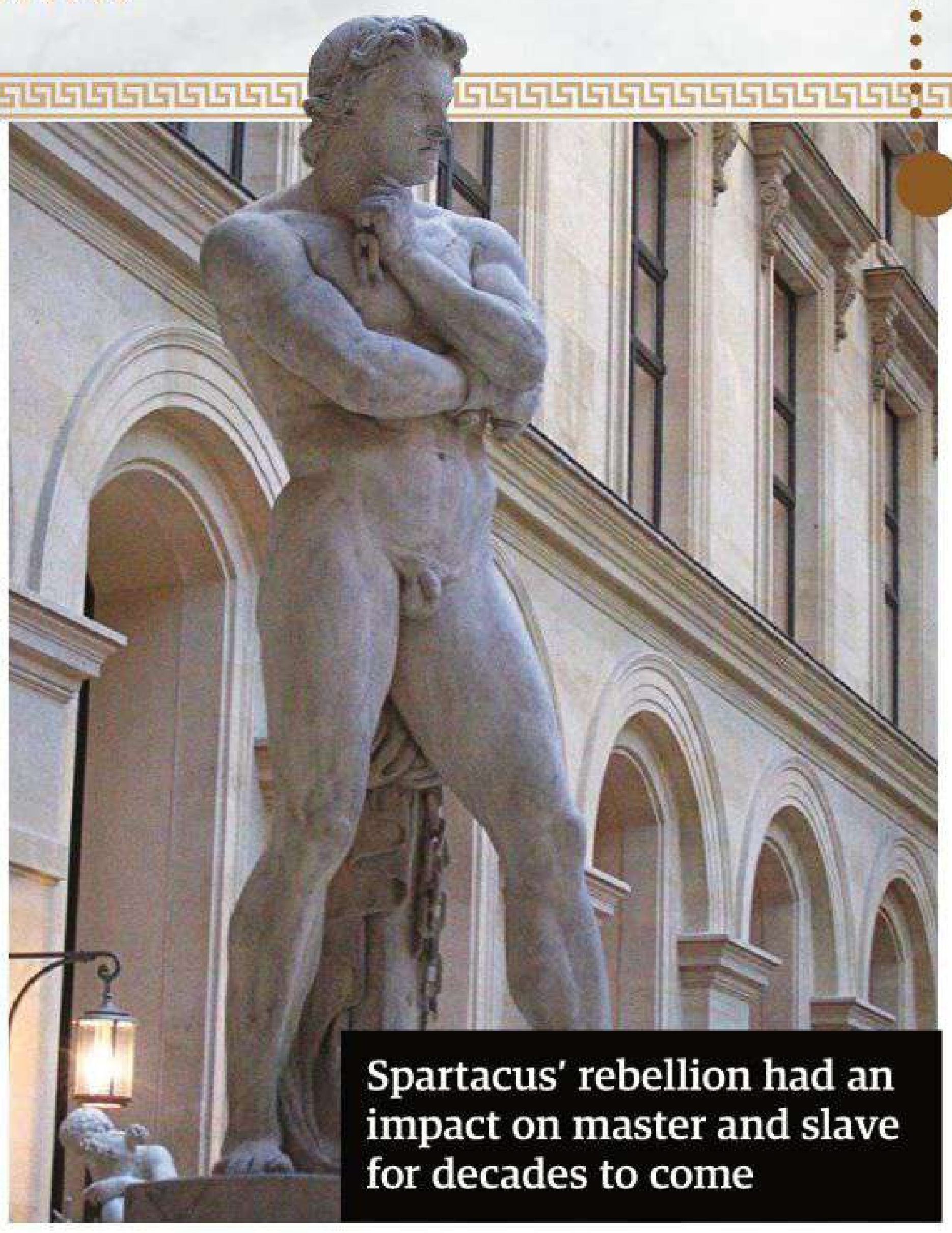
The Social War
The Social War erupts when a series of Roman cities (known collectively as the Latins) rebel against the inequality in land ownership and wealth between Rome and its allies.
91 BCE - 88 BCE

First Triumvirate formed
The first Triumvirate, an alliance between three of Rome's most powerful politicians (Julius Caesar, Pompey and Marcus Licinius Crassus) is formed.
59 BC

225 BCE · 146 BCE · 121 BCE · 105 BCE · 91 BCE · 73 BCE · 59 BCE · 44 BCE · 30 BCE · 27 BCE

First senatus consultum ultimum
In 121 BC, the first senatus consultum ultimum is passed by the Senate, granting consul Lucius Opimius emergency powers to defeat the forces of Gaius Gracchus.
121 BCE

Province of Egypt established
Around 30 BCE, Egypt's dominance of North Africa has faded and it is absorbed into Rome, becoming a Roman province as a result.
30 BCE

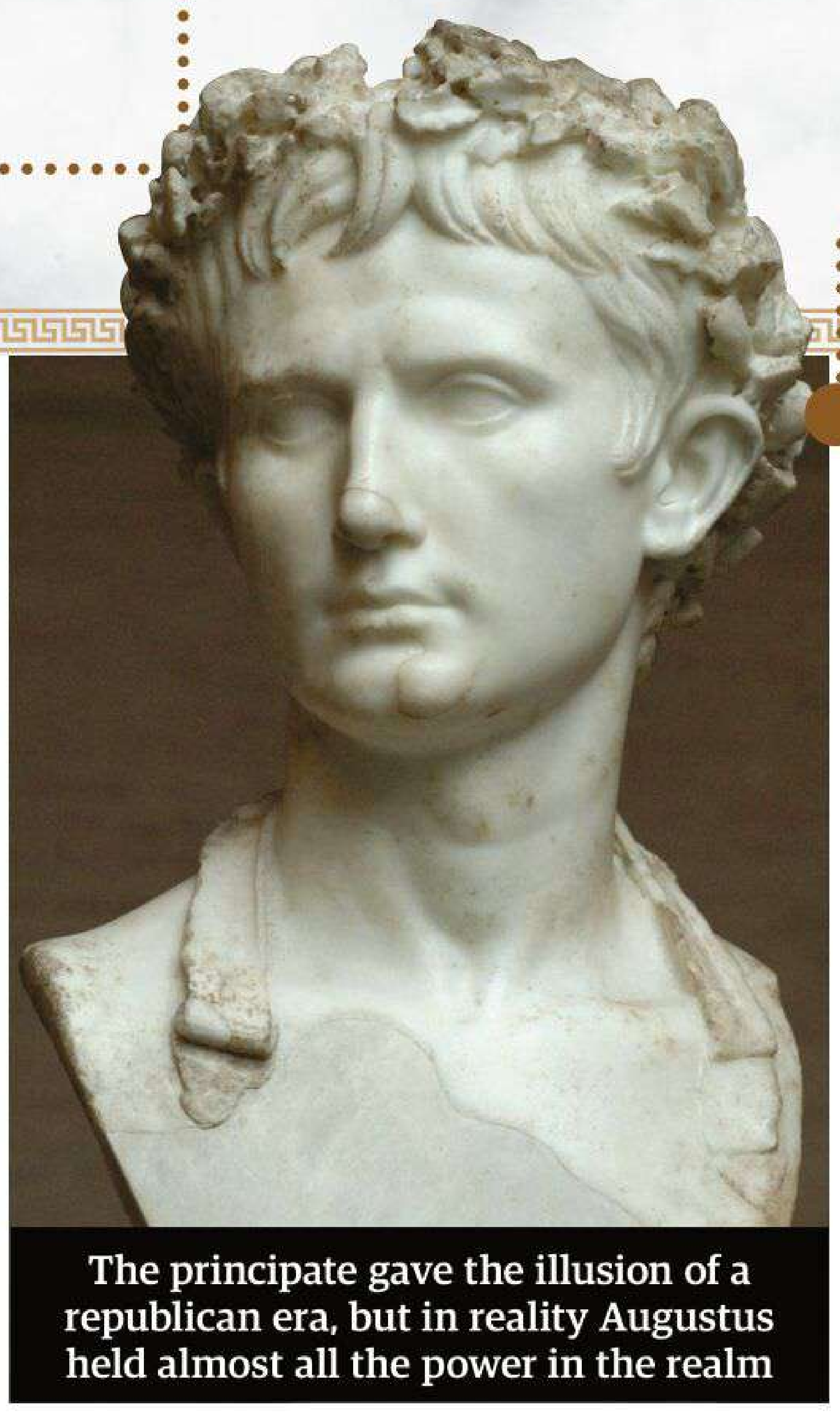


Spartacus' rebellion had an impact on master and slave for decades to come

Third Servile War begins

73 BCE – 71 BCE

The third and final slave rebellion, which is led by Spartacus, is the only servile uprising to threaten the stability of Rome itself. A band of escaped gladiators begins swelling with slaves who wish to know true freedom. Under the leadership of slave and gladiator Spartacus, the loosely armed rebels defeat a number of Roman forces before Roman commander Marcus Licinius Crassus crushes the uprising.



The principate gave the illusion of a republican era, but in reality Augustus held almost all the power in the realm

Welcome to the empire

27 BCE

Following the death of his great-uncle Julius Caesar, Gaius Octavius, known as Octavian at this point, forms the Second Triumvirate with Mark Antony and Marcus Lepidus to find his assassins. The alliance causes a civil war. Lepidus is eventually driven into exile and Mark Antony commits suicide following his defeat at the Battle of Actium. Still granted the ultimate power of office by the Senate, Octavian begins creating a framework with the Senate, beginning the empire.

THE ROMAN EMPIRE 27 BCE – 476 CE

Roman conquest of Britain

43 CE

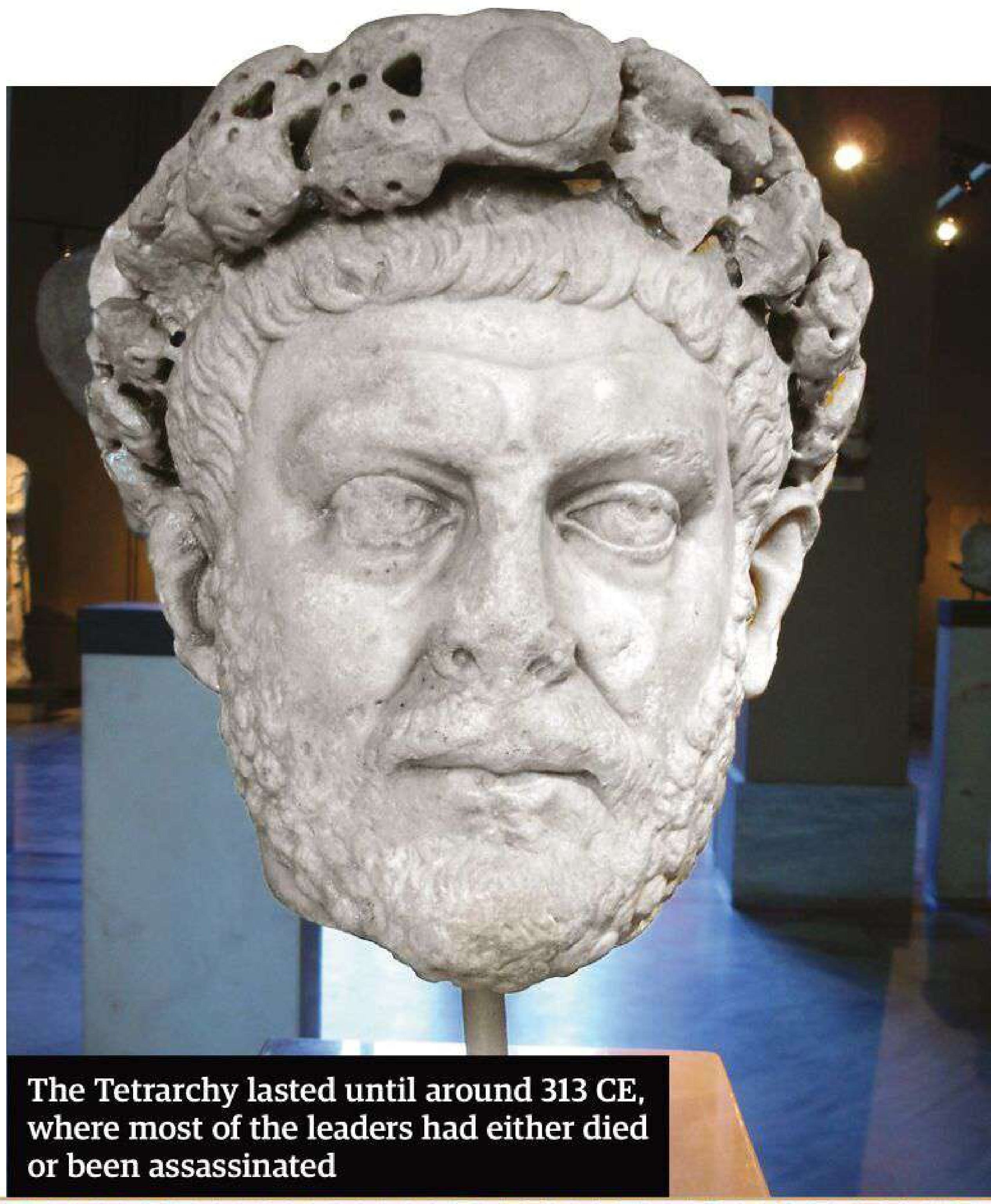
Prior to Emperor Claudius' campaign to conquer Britannia once and for all, the Romans have enjoyed a relatively healthy trading relationship with the tribes of Britain since Julius Caesar's first settlements in 55 BCE. However, the Catuvellauni have taken over from the Trinovantes as the most powerful kingdom in southeastern Britain. The Catuvellauni begin encroaching on the land of the Roman loyal Atrebates, forcing Rome to send troops to pacify Britannia once and for all. The campaign eventually takes the Romans through England and into Scotland.

Britain provided considerable resources for the empire, but it was a difficult province to control

Diocletian established the Tetrarchy

293 CE

Following almost 50 year of chaos, civil war and divided states, the politician Diocletian is recognised as emperor by the Senate and establishes a new form of governance - the Tetrarchy. Alongside three other co-emperors, Diocletian divides the Roman Empire into four separate states to be governed by each individual emperor with mutual cooperation between all four sections of the realm. The concept, for a time, proves a success - with every state having its own capital and standing armies. However, despite the joint nature of the nation, Diocletian is ultimately the supreme leader.



The Tetrarchy lasted until around 313 CE, where most of the leaders had either died or been assassinated

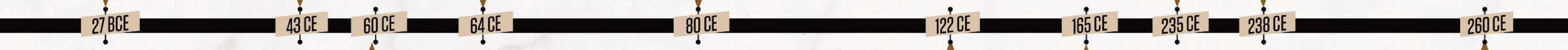
Senate grants Augustus new titles
As part of Octavian's new position as the ultimate ruler of Rome, the Senate grants him the titles of Augustus, Majestic and also princeps.
27 BCE

Great Fire of Rome
Legend says that the fire that consumed a significant proportion of Rome's infrastructure was in fact set by Emperor Nero himself. Nero blames the Christians, leading to a bloody purge.
64 CE

Colosseum is completed
In 80 BCE, the largest amphitheatre ever built is finally finished in the heart of Rome. It can house 50,000 spectators and becomes a symbol of Rome's endless passion for bloodsports.
80 CE

Crisis of the Third Century
The Crisis of the Third Century is a half-century-long period of civil war and turmoil as 26 different emperors are crowned and Rome splits into three different states.
235 CE

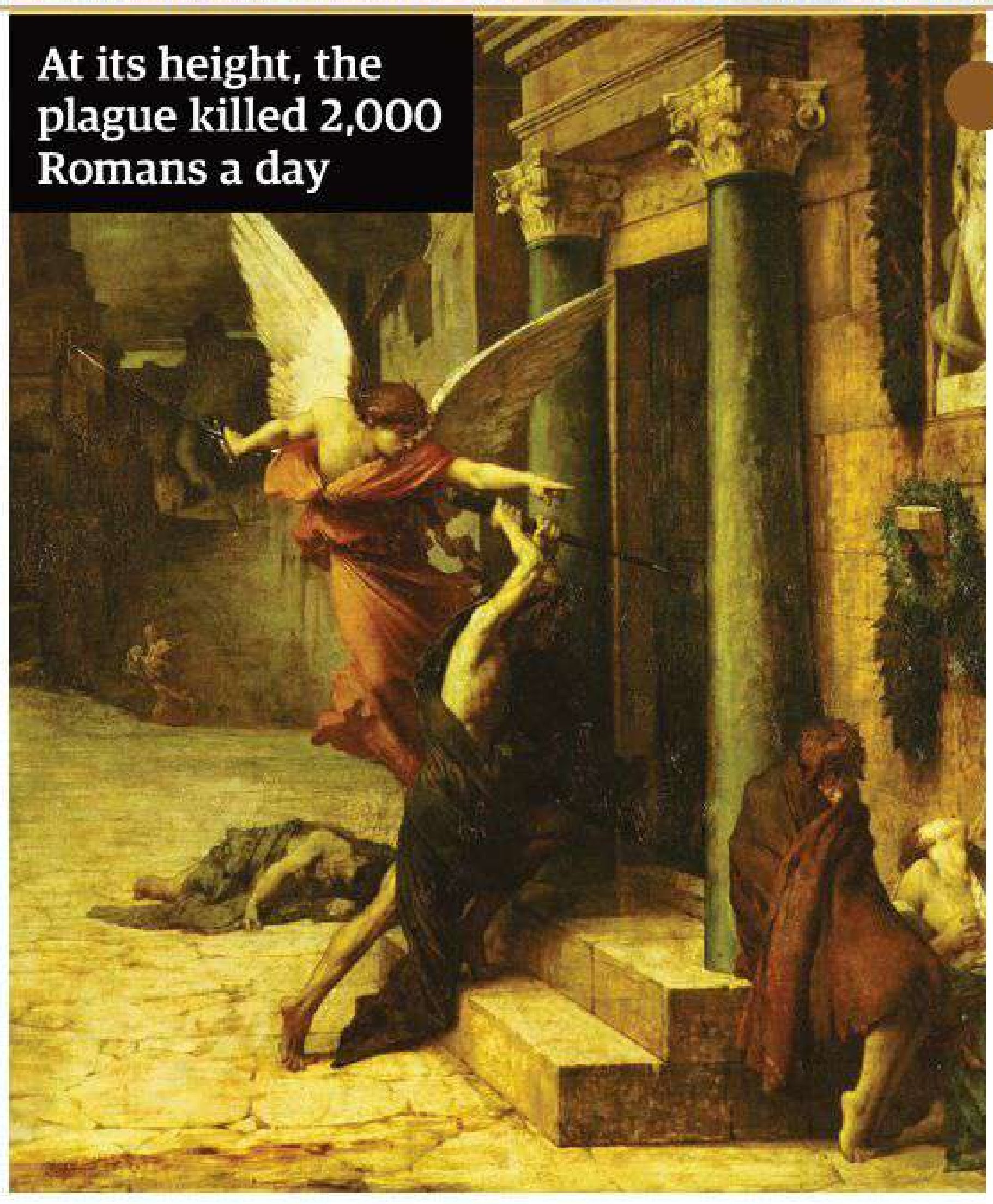
Battle of Carthage
Forces loyal to the joint emperors Gordian I and his son Gordian II are destroyed by those belonging to emperor Maximinus Thrax. Gordian I is killed and Gordian II soon commits suicide.
238 CE



Boudicca's revolt in Britannia
One of the biggest revolts in Roman Britain is led by the queen of the Iceni, Boudicca. She leads a force of 100,000 men but is ultimately defeated.
60 CE

Hadrian's Wall is started
In order to keep the barbarians of Scotland and the north of Britannia at bay, Emperor Hadrian orders a wall to be constructed. It becomes known as Hadrian's Wall and survives to this day.
122 CE

Emperor Valerian taken prisoner
In a shock development for the Roman Empire, the emperor Valerian is taken captive during a battle with the Sassanid Persian Empire. He dies in captivity.
260 CE

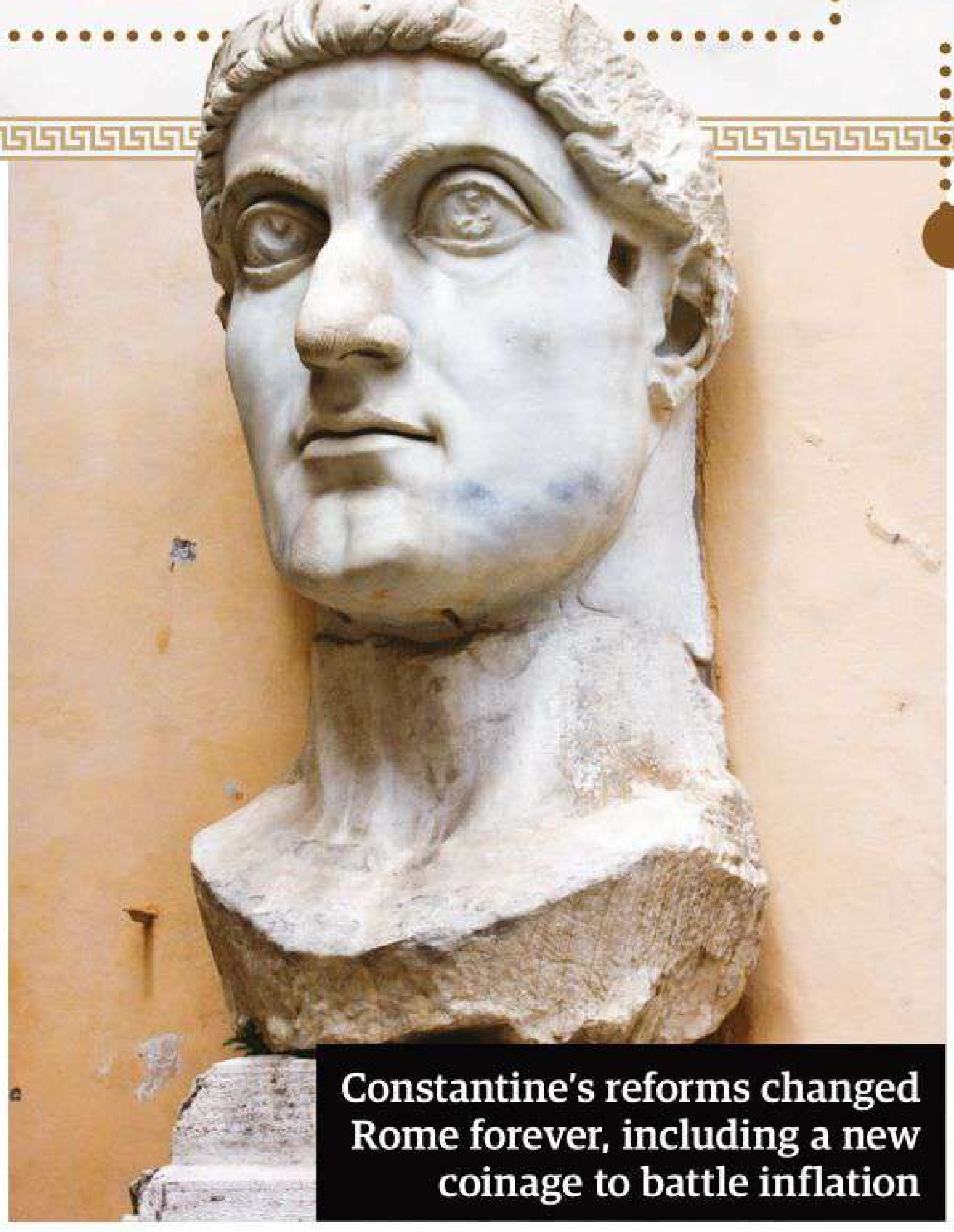


At its height, the plague killed 2,000 Romans a day

The Antonine Plague strikes

165 CE

One of the worst pandemics to ever ravage Rome, the Antonine Plague (likely a form of smallpox or perhaps an early form of measles) ends up claiming the lives of over 5 million Romans. It is thought the plague was brought back with troops returning from the Near East. The plague, which rages on and off for around 15 years, even claims the life of the emperor Lucius Verus.



Constantine's reforms changed Rome forever, including a new coinage to battle inflation

Constantine becomes first Christian emperor

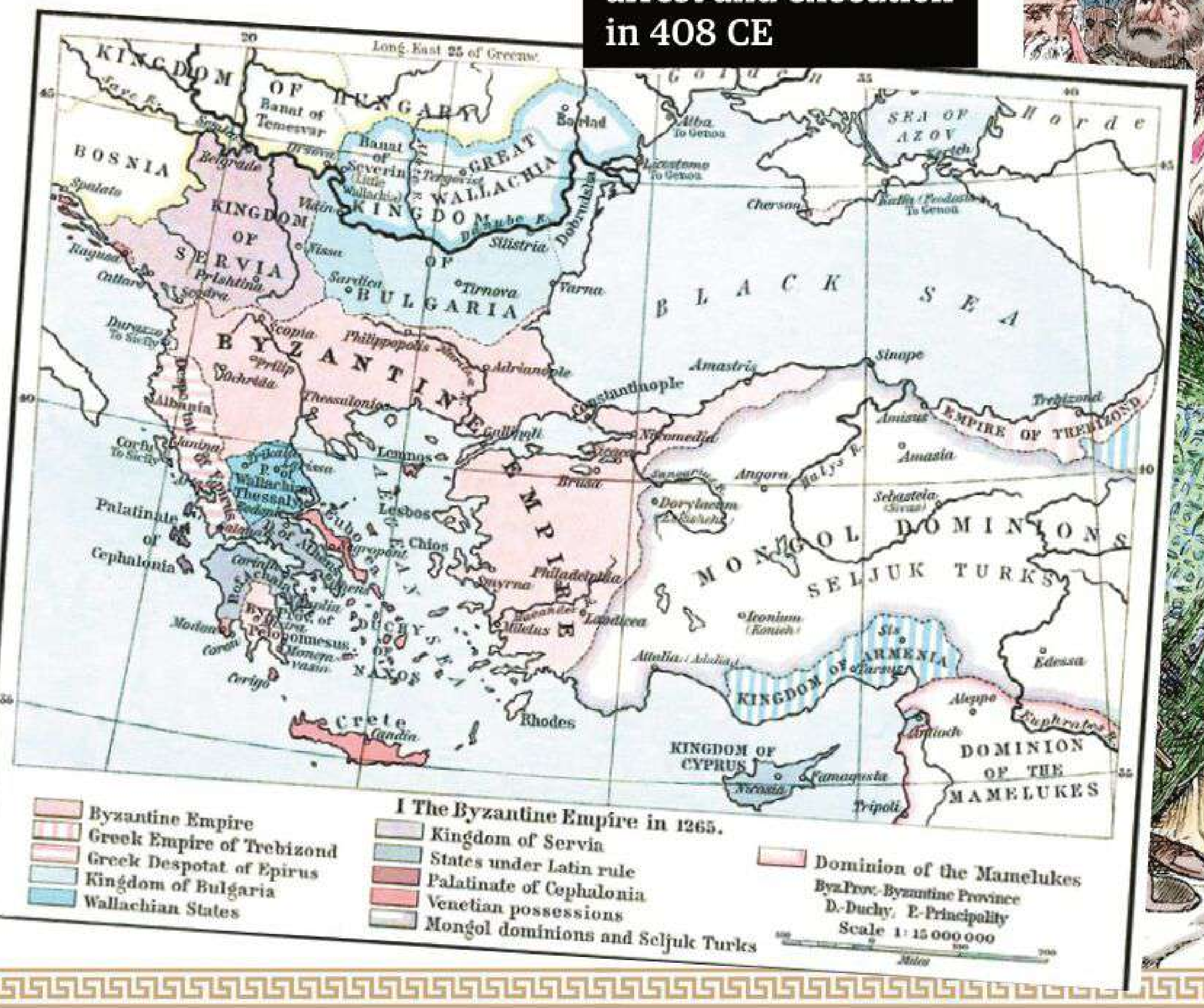
306 CE

Christians had an uneasy relationship with the religion of Rome. In fact, as recently as Diocletian, the Christian community had been demonised and purged. However, that all changes when Constantine - the son of one of the first members of the Tetrarchy - becomes the sole emperor. He sets about reforming the national mindset and even chairs the First Council of Nicaea in 325 CE, where an assembly of bishops is called to create a consensus of modern Christianity.

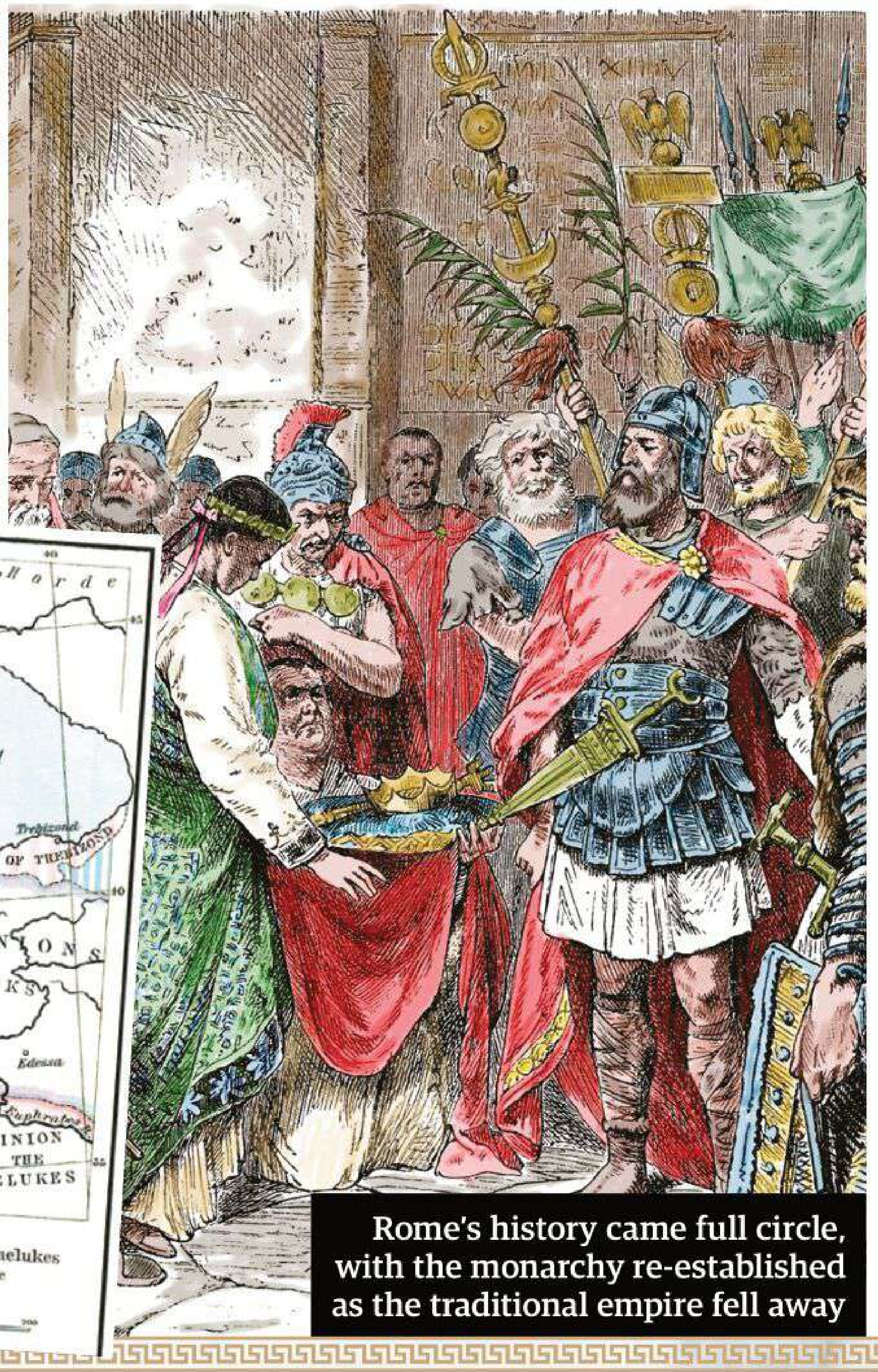
Rome is divided into two empires

395 CE

A direct result of Constantine's desire to rule the Roman Empire from the East in Byzantium, it is decided that the realm should be operated by the two imperial administrations. The empire is initially divided by Theodosius I upon his deathbed, who carves it into the Western Roman Empire and the Eastern Roman Empire, and grants rule to his two sons. As a result, Arcadius becomes Augustus of the eastern Byzantine Empire and his brother Honorius becomes emperor of the Western Empire. To the Romans, the country is far from divided – instead, the notion of two separate governments looking after one country is seen as the norm.


I The Byzantine Empire in 1265.
Byzantine Empire
Greek Empire of Trebizond
Greek Despotat of Epirus
Kingdom of Bulgaria
Wallachian States
Kingdom of Servia
States under Latin rule
Palatinate of Cephalonia
Venetian possessions
Mongol dominions and Seljuk Turks
Dominion of the Mamelukes
Byz.Prov.-Byzantine Province
D.-Duchy. E-Principality
Scale 1:15 000 000
BLACK SEA
Constantinople
Crete
Rhodes
KINGDOM OF CYPRUS
SELJUK TURKS
KINGDOM OF ARMENIA
DOMINION OF THE MAMELUKES

For a time, the governance of the Western Roman Empire fell to regent Stilicho before his ineptitude at the task led him to arrest and execution in 408 CE



Rome's history came full circle, with the monarchy re-established as the traditional empire fell away

Western Roman Empire falls

476 CE

By the middle of the 5th century, the Western Roman Empire is a shadow of its former self. The position of emperor no longer wields the power and respect it once did, and the West lacks the stability of the Byzantine Empire to the East. The current emperor, Romulus Augustulus, has been installed by his father a year prior but doesn't have the support of the people or the Senate. This leads to the military commander Odoacer leading a revolt that removes the emperor and his installation as patrician. With the support of the Senate, he is the first king of Italy.

Visigoths sack Rome
For the first time in 800 years, Rome is successfully overrun by an enemy. The city is sacked and almost burned to the ground by the Visigoths, led by their king, Alaric.
410 CE

293 CE · 306 CE · 330 CE · 395 CE · 410 CE · 476 CE

Capital moved from Rome to Constantinople
As part of Constantine the Great's systematic upheaval of Roman values, he abandons Rome and sets up his new capital, Constantinople, in modern day Istanbul.
330 CE

> "The Roman Empire was ahead of its time, with even the Dark Ages failing to eliminate its mark"

THE LASTING EFFECT OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

The Roman Kingdom, Republic and Empire were very powerful so it's no surprise to see the imprint of that nation today. From language to infrastructure, the Roman Empire was a state far ahead of its time, with even the regressive years of the Dark Ages failing to eliminate its mark.

Latin, the official language of the empire, didn't die with the realm but instead flourished. It was adopted as the official language of the Catholic Church and became the ipso facto language of the sciences. It can be found in English, German, Dutch and many other modern dialects.

Our calendars owe their structure and style to the Romans – the Julian calendar, introduced by Julius Caesar, made the year 365 days long and divided it into 12 months. It was also the Romans who chose to begin the year in January and add a leap year every four years in February. The Romans also introduced the seven-day week, with the planets forming their names (except Sunday, which has its origins in Christianity).

The Romans' use of democracy and forums is still seen among countless nations, while their embrace of Christianity under Constantine the Great helped secure Rome as the home of the Catholic Church. Elsewhere, the Romans' use of sewers, aqueducts and roads showed the rest of the world how to build lasting infrastructure.

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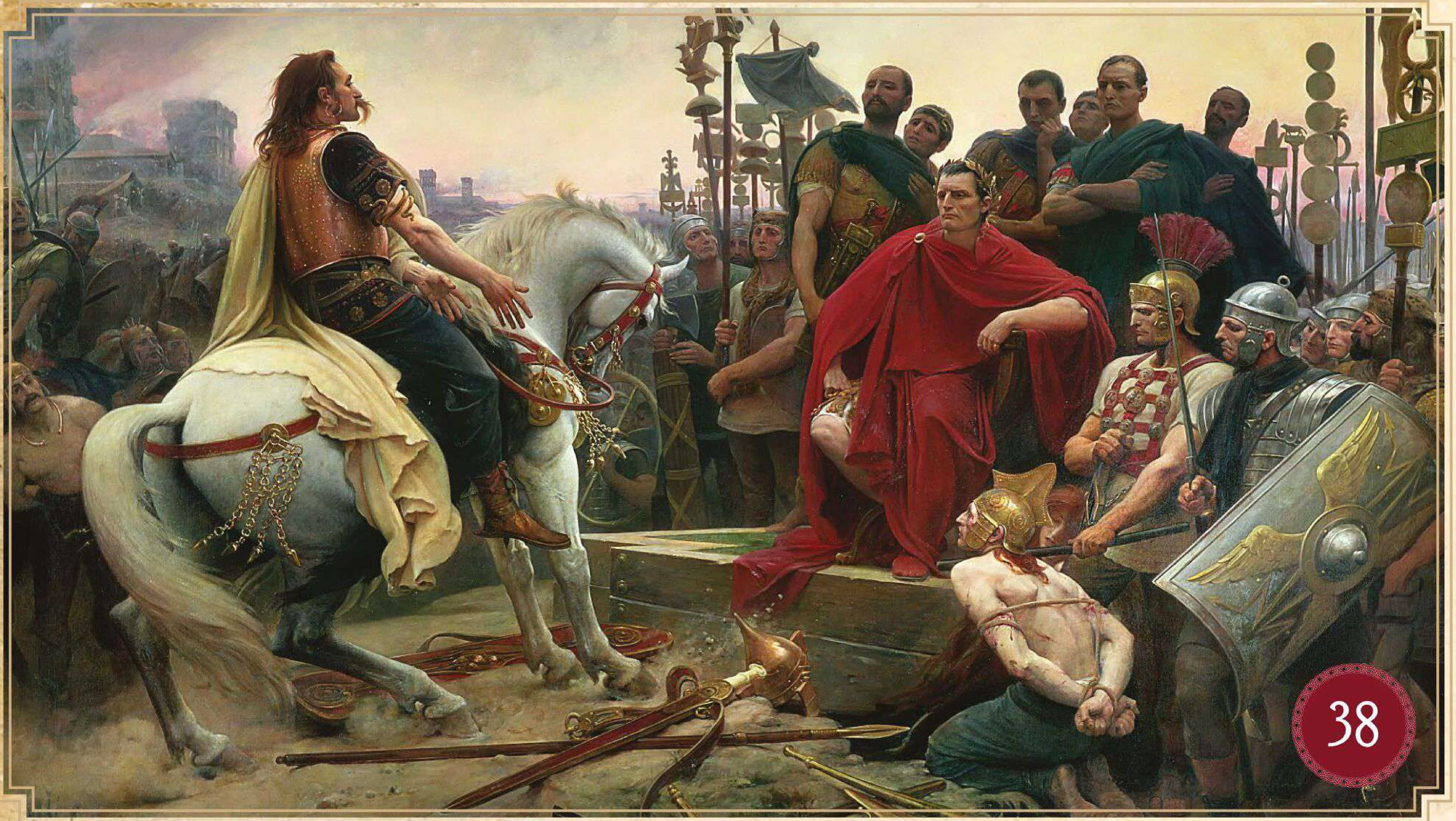

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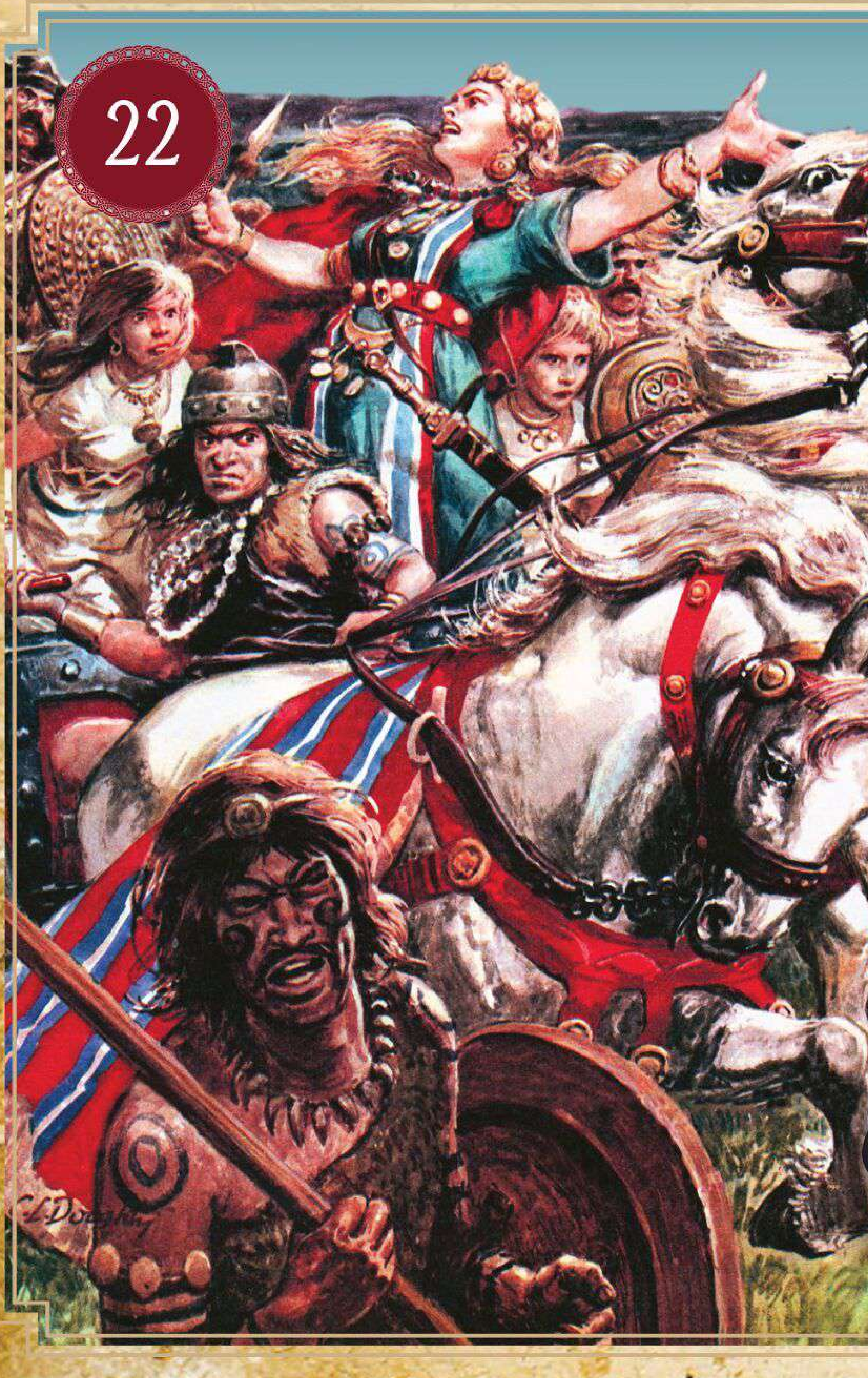

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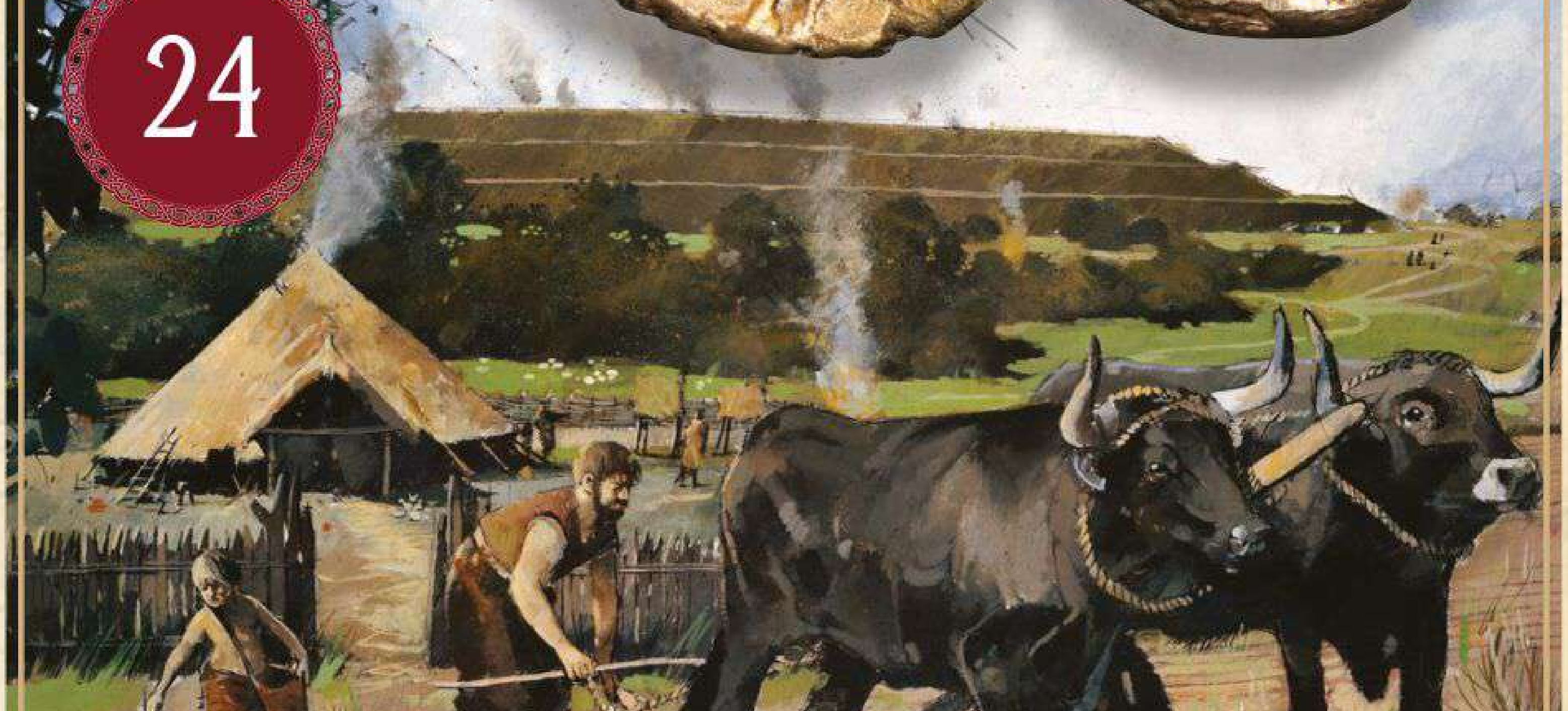

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CELTIC BRITAIN

Find out what life was like in Britain before the Romans made their way over the English Channel

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24 CELTIC BRITAIN

28 A CELTIC ROUNDHOUSE

30 CELTS: CULT OF DEATH

38 CAESAR'S INVASION OF BRITAIN

THE CELTS

EUROPE,
1200 BCE - 500 CE

Who were they?

The Celts were a loosely defined group of tribes that collectively formed one of the largest groups of people in ancient Europe. They lived predominantly off the land in small communities, some of which gradually merged over time to become larger settlements, and were informally tied by a similar religion, language and culture.

To the ends of Europe

They were scattered over a wide area, with tribes settled in locations ranging from the British Isles to central Europe and the borders of Ukraine. Some groups reached even farther afield, settling in the Balkans and stretched towards west Asia.

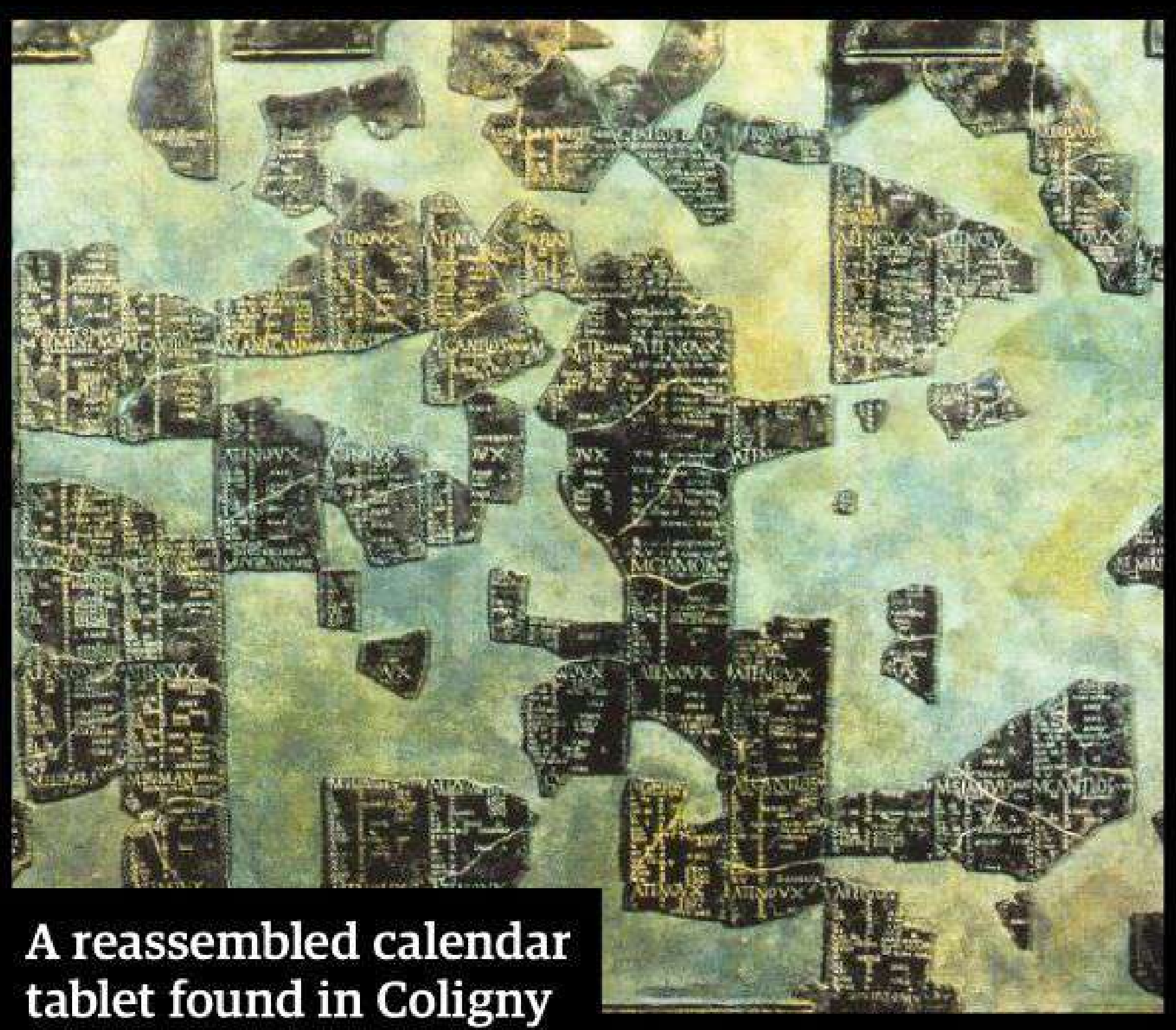
Ancient origins

The earliest archaeological evidence of the Celts' existence dates back to around 1200 BCE, although what we would refer to as the Celtic civilisation was in existence by around 750 BCE. They began to migrate to Britain around 500 BCE, and although they never truly 'died out', many either migrated or merged with the Roman populace.

A stele for a deceased tribal aristocrat

No mere barbarians

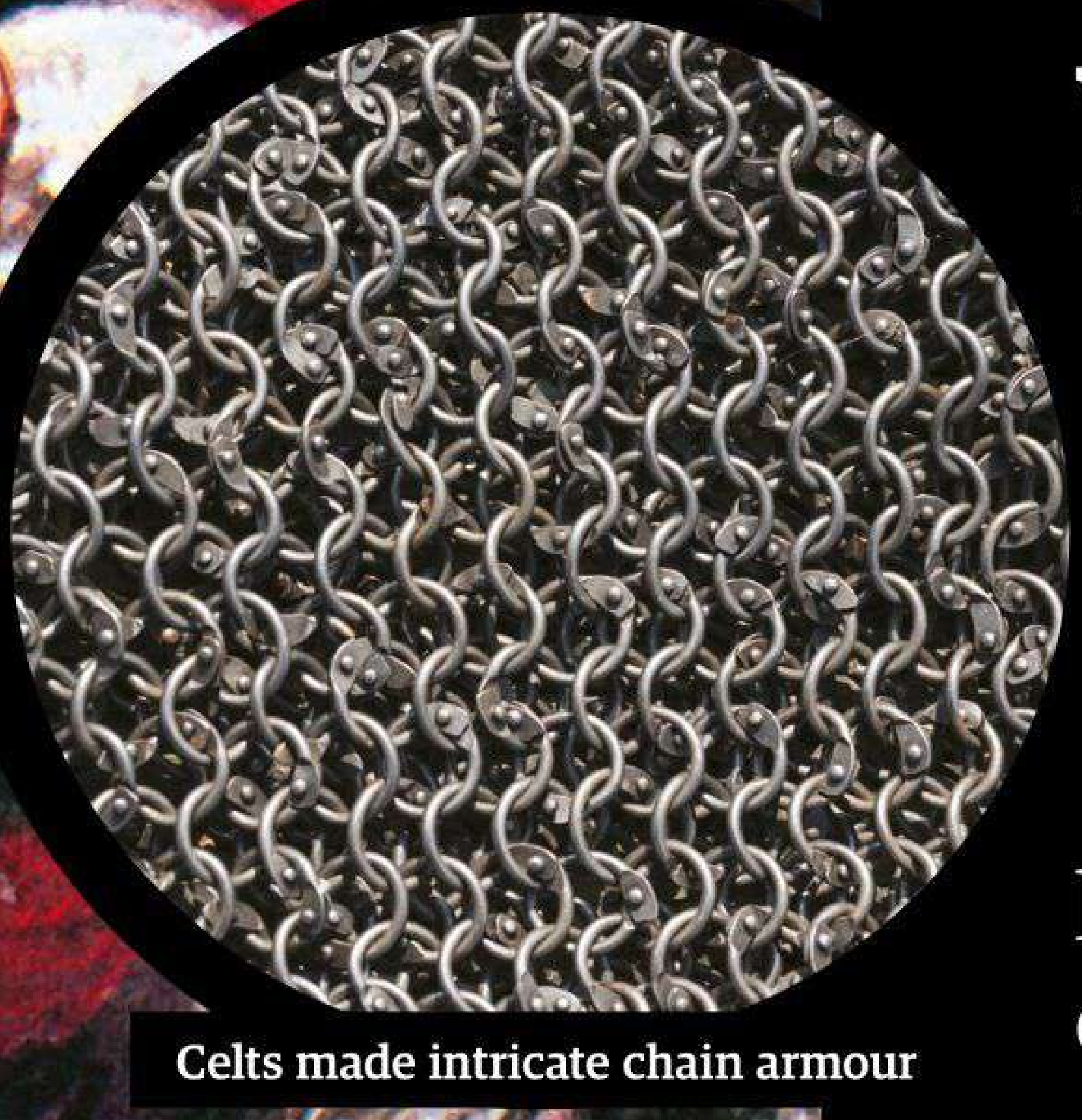
Myth portrays them as savages, but they possessed impressive reserves of knowledge. For instance, their calendars were more accurate than the Romans', proving that they were capable of mathematical and scientific thought.



A reassembled calendar tablet found in Coligny

Warrior race

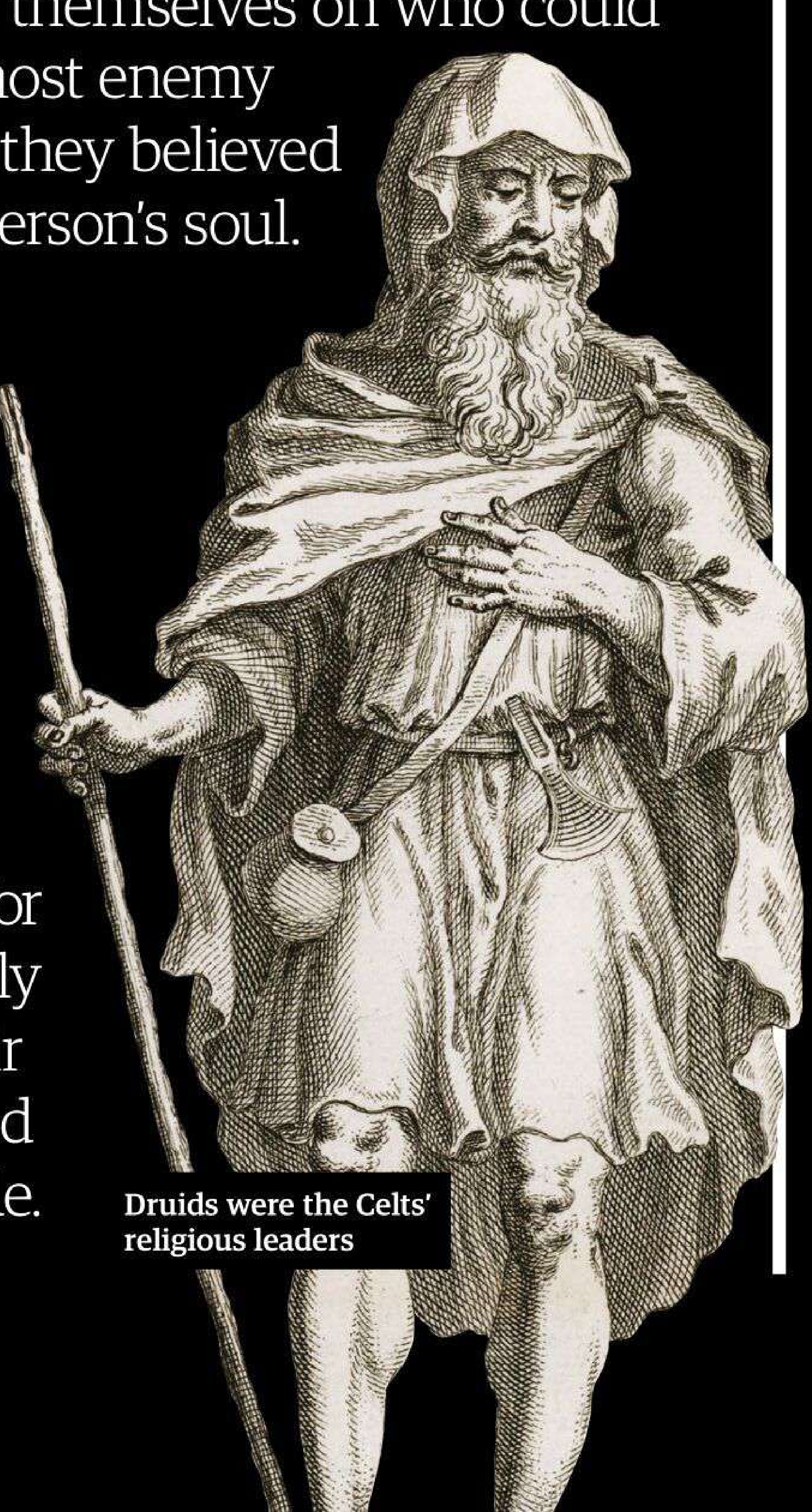
The Celts were ferocious warriors, with their people trained in battle from childhood. Their weapons were predominantly made of iron, and they prided themselves on who could collect the most enemy heads, which they believed contained a person's soul.



Celts made intricate chain armour

Druids

The Celts possessed a strong religious culture, with holy men called druids having a strong presence. They spent 20 years training for their position, gaining knowledge of Celtic customs, astronomy and philosophy, and often acted as advisers to their rulers and the general populace alike.



Druids were the Celts' religious leaders

Road builders

Although Romans generally take the credit for being master route planners, the Celts actually constructed a road system before them. Their paths were made out of wood, and connected the different settlements for purposes of trade.

Boudica led an army against Roman invaders

KEY FIGURES

Boudica
C.60 CE

The warrior queen of the Iceni tribe who led the uprising against the Romans in 61 CE.

Vercingetorix
82-46 BCE

The chief of the Gallic Arverni tribe, who united the Gauls against the Romans during the Gallic Wars.

Caratacus
10-50 CE

The chief of the Catuvellauni tribe evaded the Romans for years before being captured and ultimately pardoned.

Cassivellaunus
C.54 BCE

He led the defence against Julius Caesar's second expedition and military campaign in Britain in 54 BCE.

Commius
C.50 BCE

The king of a number of tribes at various point, he allied with Roman leader Julius Caesar before later rebelling.

MAJOR EVENTS

Celts settle in Britain
500 BCE

Around this time, the first Celtic tribes started to settle in Britain, having gradually migrated from central Europe.

Celts sack Rome
387 BCE

The Gallic Celts ransacked the city after defeating the Romans at the Battle of the Allia.

Romans in Britain
43 CE

After crossing the English Channel, Romans ultimately replaced the Celts as the ruling force in Britain.

Boudica's uprising
61 CE

Under her leadership, an estimated 70,000 to 80,000 Celts unsuccessfully rebelled against Roman rule.

Collapse of the Roman Empire
476 CE

With the fall of the Roman Empire, much of the remnants of the two civilisations would come to merge together.

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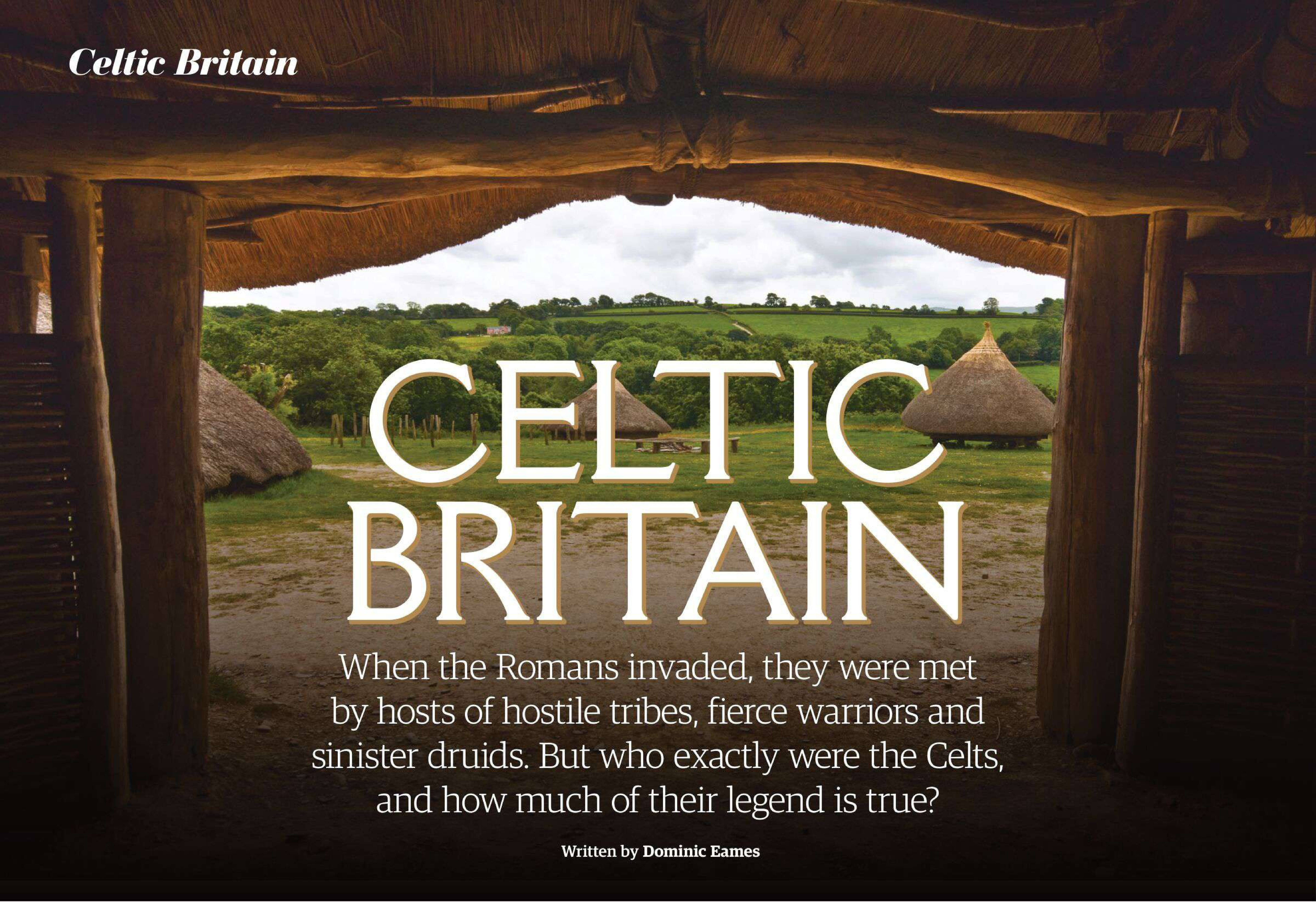


CELTIC BRITAIN

When the Romans invaded, they were met by hosts of hostile tribes, fierce warriors and sinister druids. But who exactly were the Celts, and how much of their legend is true?

Written by **Dominic Eames**

Above The Celts in Britain left no written records, but plenty of hill forts, like Castell Henllys in Pembrokeshire, now the site of reconstructions of roundhouses

The word 'Celt' is certainly an evocative one, conjuring up images of an ancient, hardy and almost mystical people who lived all over the British Isles and Ireland, and stood up against the Romans when they invaded. There were the fierce woad-painted warriors making a terrifying sight as they ran into battle without fear or armour, wielding weapons of iron. There were the proud women standing in the ancient world as rulers and fighters in their own right. There were their druids, in flowing robes, performing ghoulish rituals and making human sacrifices to the gods, sometimes by burning scores of animals or people alive inside a wicker man.

Their settlements rose above the land in the shape of hundreds of mighty hill forts, defended settlements that still stand today as a reminder of their reach. And their culture spread yet further thanks to their beautiful art style of swirling shapes, patterns, figures and animals, which has also survived the centuries to become iconic of the mysterious Celts. But while the sense of Celtic identity is stronger now than ever, these images have long been misleading. They may suggest that a single ethnic group held dominion before being overwhelmed by the Romans. That's not the story of Celtic Britain. In fact, there's no such thing as 'Celtic Britain'.

The Celts were not a distinct race, but a collection of separate tribes loosely linked by language, customs, religion and culture. They spread out across much of central Europe during the first millennium BCE, reaching as far as modern-day Turkey, and some became extremely wealthy and powerful. Our knowledge about the Celtic diaspora is limited, though, due to a lack of written records. The tribes had an oral tradition, which was why poets were such important figures in their society. This means we must rely on archaeological finds, which have been hugely impressive, but also the writings of their neighbours and enemies, namely the Greeks and Romans.

To them, the Celts – 'Keltoi' to the Greeks and 'Celtae' to the Romans – were barbarians, and they made sure they depicted them as a savage people that posed a threat to true civilisation. Yet such animosity was directed at the tribes in mainland Europe, chiefly the Gauls, while the people living in the British Isles and Ireland were not actually considered to be Celtic at all. It would not be until the 17th and 18th centuries that the word Celt became forever associated with what the Romans knew as Britons.

So the idea of a 'Celtic Britain' – one under the control of a unified Celtic group – seems untenable. More accurately, the population of pre-Roman Britain was made up of individual Celt-like tribes, or peoples who adopted their customs, living through the Iron Age. That is not to belittle Celtic influence. After all, the nations and regions most strongly considered to be Celtic today are Scotland, Wales, Cornwall and the Isle of Man, as well as Brittany in the northwest of France, and Ireland.

Dozens of tribes lived across Iron Age Britain, from the red-haired Caledones in the Scottish Highlands to the Iceni in Norfolk, best known for being led by Boudicca in the early first century. They would all have their own variances when it came to social structure, customs and lifestyle. The whole of Cornwall and Devon was inhabited by small groups of Dumnonii while in what's now modern-day Wales, there were several main tribes, including the Demetae, Ordovices, Silures and Deceangli. The latter lived near Anglesey, which was seen as the British home of the druids.

There would be clashes as rivalling tribes fought over property and land, but the population grew steadily throughout the Iron Age to around one million people. Yet while some, like the Brigantes in the Pennines, grew large by bringing smaller communities under their protection, there would have been no reason to feel any sense of collective identity, or know how many tribes existed beyond those of their neighbours.

Every tribe had its own ruler, who could either be chosen to lead or have the title handed down to them, and an elite class, often made up of warriors. They commanded loyalty through strength, proving they could keep their people safe. Just as powerful, however, were the druids, the high priests and spiritual core of a Celtic society. After years of training, they served as religious leaders, teachers, healers, advisers and judges, and would be held in such esteem that Roman writers would claim that a single druid could stop a battle by standing in between the two armies.

Oswestry hill fort, Shropshire, has been described as the "Stonehenge of the Iron Age period"

Women could become either a tribal ruler or a druid, as they enjoyed a more equal position to men than seen in other civilisations of the time. Ironically, Romans would use the Celts' more egalitarian society as proof of their barbarity. While they by no means had the same rights as the men in their tribe, women could own land, had freedoms when it came to marriage and divorce, and would be called upon to fight. In fact, it was the women who taught their children how to wield a weapon.

The Celts had a well-earned reputation as ferocious warriors, and warfare was something to be prepared for by the whole tribe. Families would accompany the warriors to the battlefields in order to watch the action. Warriors may not, as claimed by the Romans, have gone into battle naked, but they would claim the heads of their fallen enemy as a prize, believing them to be the vessel of the human soul. Heads would adorn their saddles,

> "The Celts had a well-earned reputation as ferocious warriors, and warfare was something to prepare for"

The remains of an Iron Age roundhouse, one of around 20 on the slope of Holyhead Mountain on Anglesey and even their doorposts. Away from their skills in battle, a Celt's life revolved around farming. They would keep herds of animals, mostly cattle, pigs and sheep, and ploughed crops, with wheat and barley being vital to make bread and beer. Whatever was harvested would be kept in large granaries or pits near their homes, and be used at communal events like festivals and feasts. They were not entirely reliant on what they could farm, as trade became increasingly important through the Iron Age. Key ports like Hengistbury would bring in exotic goods from Europe, such as wine and fruits, which could be traded for furs, slaves and precious metalwork.

The development of iron during this period saw dramatic advances in technology, and the Celts were quick to take advantage of this by making stronger weapons and ploughs. The best metalworking would be seen in the artistic style that blossomed in Britain. Inspired by the art coming from a culture in modern-day Switzerland, La Teine, from around 500 BCE, Celts decorated all manner of items made of iron, bronze, gold and silver, from brooches and torcs to chariot fittings and armour, with the most intricate, patterned and abstract designs.

While they were certainly desired as status symbols and precious burial items, they would also be used as sacrifices to the gods by being thrown into rivers, lakes and bogs. This actually helped preserve many priceless treasures, such as the Battersea Shield, and Waterloo Helmet, for millennia. There is so much that remains a mystery about the Celts due to a lack of evidence, but the exquisite pieces of art that have survived are now the most enduring part of their legacy.

The most visible part of their legacy, though, are undoubtedly the thousands of hill forts still towering over the countryside. A settlement would be built perched on top of a hill and enclosed by rings of banks and ditches, making it a well-defended place of refuge in times of war. Archaeological excavations have revealed that they would have also been used as centres for trade, food storage, political gatherings and religious ceremonies. Among the most impressive of the hill forts, at around 40 acres in size, is Old Oswestry in Shropshire.

Hill forts may not have been intended as permanent settlements, however. Most Celts lived in roundhouses, clustered in small communities around their farms. Made of timber or stone and boasting a thatched roof in the shape of a cone, each would be large enough for an extended family. There is also evidence of lacustrine, roundhouse-like dwellings that were built on stilts over marshes or lakes, called crannogs. And while the Romans are praised for their roads, it is thought that the Celts got there first by establishing wooden road networks to help with trade.

Yet there is still so much that we do not know about the Celts in Iron Age Britain, and may never know. The images that the word 'Celt' evoke are not, in themselves, fabrications. There were warriors with faces painted blue with woad, there were women ruling over tribes and fighting, and there were druids performing rituals. But they have been recorded, in the written word at least, by the very people who wished to make them look barbaric and uncivilised. And when the Romans invaded, they were not all that interested in acknowledging the massive cultural and artistic achievements of the people they found there. There was much more to the so-called Celts than that.

SECRETS OF THE CELTIC LANGUAGE

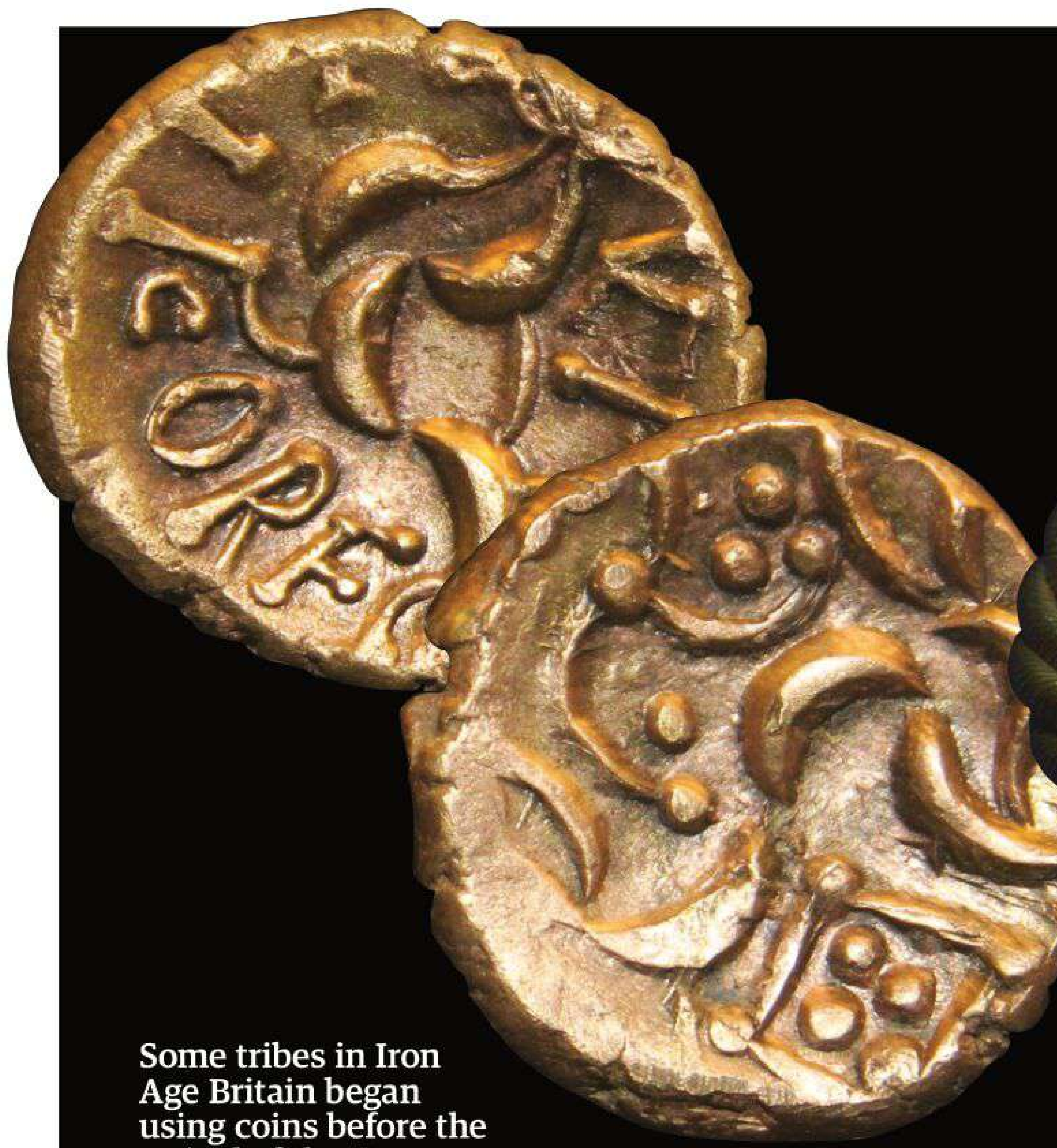
How the people of Iron Age Britain became 'Celts'

The peoples of the British Isles and Ireland in the first millennium BCE did not call themselves Celts, and neither did the Romans who wrote about them, yet the Celtic identity still survives in the six territories of Ireland, Scotland, Wales, the Isle of Man, Cornwall and Brittany.

This comes down to language. In the 16th century, the Scottish historian and scholar George Buchanan first suggested that the non-English languages of these regions were similar to those spoken in pre-Roman Europe by the Gauls, whom the Romans did refer to as Celts. Buchanan's claim would mean the Celts travelled to the British Isles and Ireland.

Then, in the early 1700s, Edward Lhuyd, a pioneering linguist, noted that there were actually two branches of the Celtic language. There was Brythonic, which originated in Gaul and can be seen in Welsh, Cornish and Breton, and Goidelic (or Gaelic) from the Iberian Peninsula, as found in Irish, Scottish and Manx. This cemented the idea that anyone who spoke these languages was of Celtic origin. It is only from the 18th century onwards that people took on the word Celt as a badge of identity, and it has since grown to take on national and political importance.

> "The development of iron saw dramatic advances in technology"

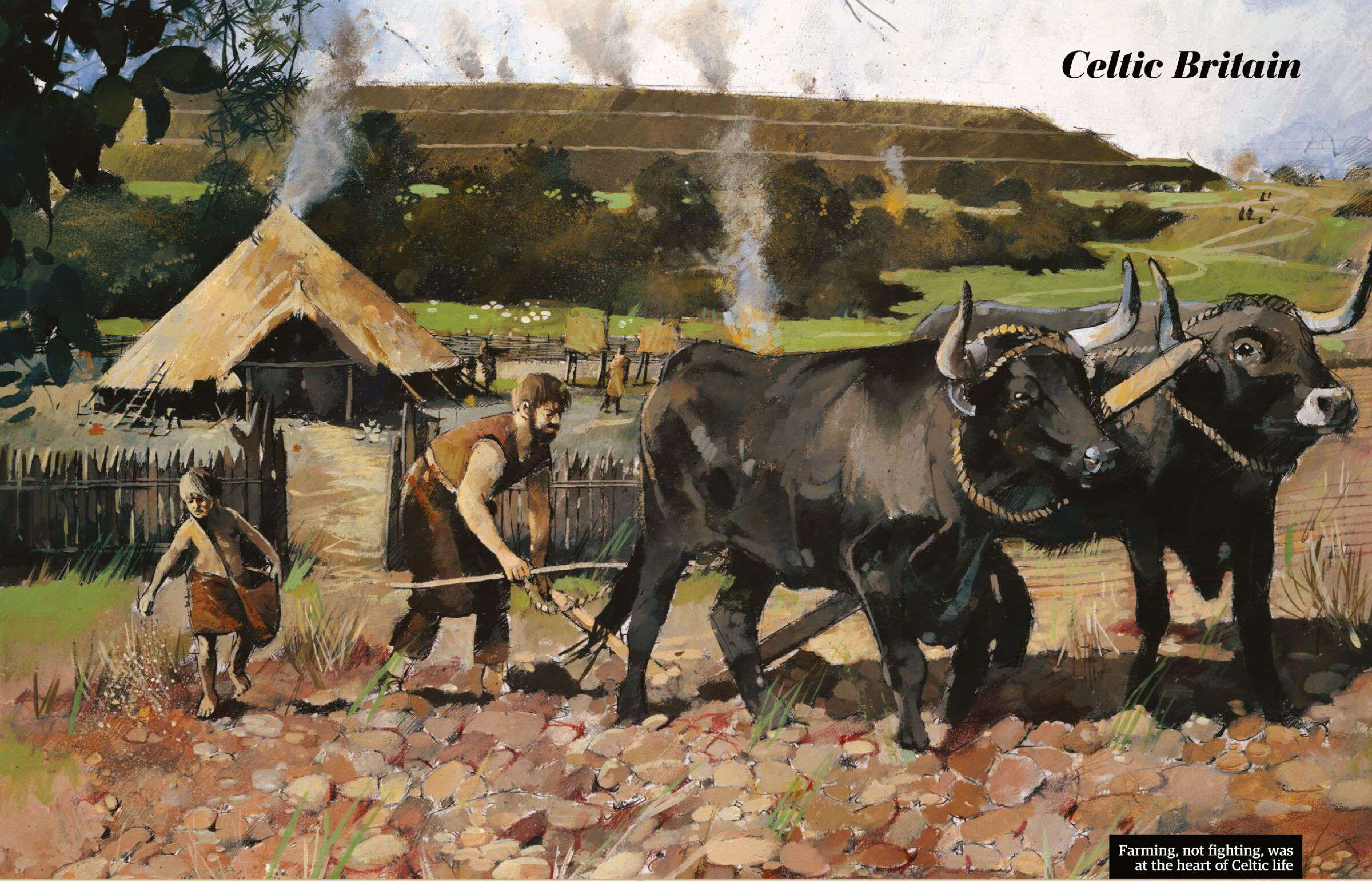


Some tribes in Iron Age Britain began using coins before the arrival of the Romans

Weighing over 1kg and made of 64 twisted wires, the Snettisham Great Torc would have been worn around the neck

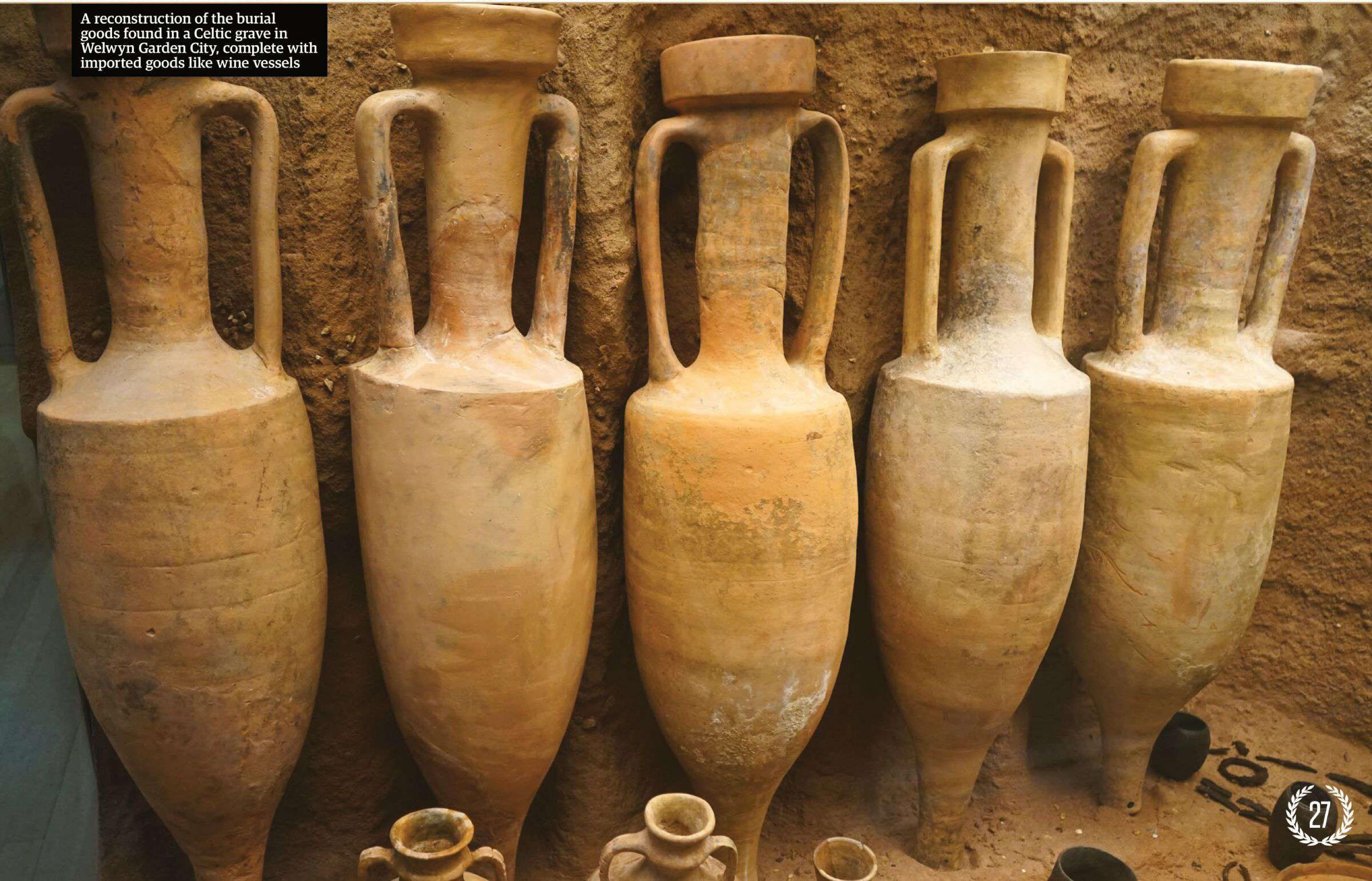
The Battersea Shield, made of bronze and red glass inlays, was recovered from the River Thames in 1857

© Alamy, Getty Images, Oswestry Borderland Tourism/Old Oswestry Hillfort license CC BY-SA 2.0



Farming, not fighting, was at the heart of Celtic life

A reconstruction of the burial goods found in a Celtic grave in Welwyn Garden City, complete with imported goods like wine vessels



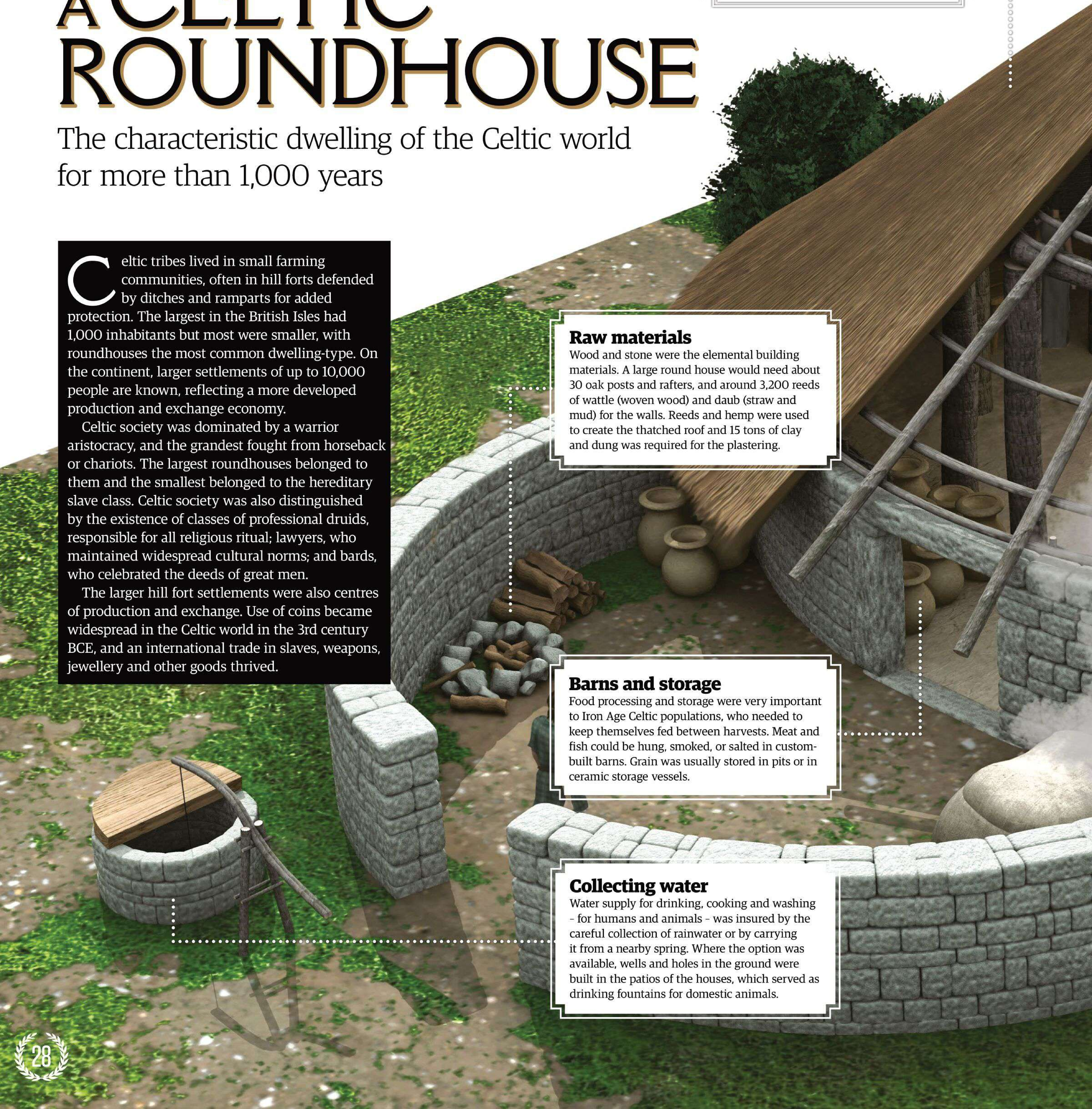
A CELTIC ROUNDHOUSE

The characteristic dwelling of the Celtic world for more than 1,000 years

Celtic tribes lived in small farming communities, often in hill forts defended by ditches and ramparts for added protection. The largest in the British Isles had 1,000 inhabitants but most were smaller, with roundhouses the most common dwelling-type. On the continent, larger settlements of up to 10,000 people are known, reflecting a more developed production and exchange economy.

Celtic society was dominated by a warrior aristocracy, and the grandest fought from horseback or chariots. The largest roundhouses belonged to them and the smallest belonged to the hereditary slave class. Celtic society was also distinguished by the existence of classes of professional druids, responsible for all religious ritual; lawyers, who maintained widespread cultural norms; and bards, who celebrated the deeds of great men.

The larger hill fort settlements were also centres of production and exchange. Use of coins became widespread in the Celtic world in the 3rd century BCE, and an international trade in slaves, weapons, jewellery and other goods thrived.



Conical structure
All Celtic roundhouses were conical in shape. They could vary in diameter from five to 15 metres for a really grand dwelling. To make the roof, a wooden frame was created to establish the basic structure, which was then filled out with thatch, before the whole building, inside and out, was plastered over with a layer of clay and manure.

Raw materials
Wood and stone were the elemental building materials. A large round house would need about 30 oak posts and rafters, and around 3,200 reeds of wattle (woven wood) and daub (straw and mud) for the walls. Reeds and hemp were used to create the thatched roof and 15 tons of clay and dung was required for the plastering.

Barns and storage
Food processing and storage were very important to Iron Age Celtic populations, who needed to keep themselves fed between harvests. Meat and fish could be hung, smoked, or salted in custom-built barns. Grain was usually stored in pits or in ceramic storage vessels.

Collecting water
Water supply for drinking, cooking and washing – for humans and animals – was insured by the careful collection of rainwater or by carrying it from a nearby spring. Where the option was available, wells and holes in the ground were built in the patios of the houses, which served as drinking fountains for domestic animals.

A Celtic Roundhouse

Clothing
Celts wore long-sleeved shirts or tunics and long trousers. According to wealth, these garments were made from wool, linen, or even, if the family was rich and lived closer to the Mediterranean, silk. Cloaks were made of wool and kept in place with brooches (fibulae).

The hearth
A fire for cooking and heating the house was maintained in a hearth at the centre of the house. There was no hole in the roof because the resulting updraft would have set light to the thatch. The pots used to cook food were supported with ropes on wooden poles.

Layout
Regular daily activities had allotted spaces within the home. Sleeping, working, storage, and food preparation were confined to precise areas of the interior, leading to the belief that some kind of ritual ideology of ordered space was shared by Celtic populations.

Furnishing the home
Iron Age Celts used few pieces of furniture to make the most of the space available to them, but traces of benches, stools, tables and rush mat beds have been found. Sometimes, tables were only mounds of earth located next to the internal walls of the dwelling. Animal skins and woven woollen cloths were hung to provide extra insulation.

Baking
Ovens for baking grains into bread were located outside. Turning grains into bread rather than porridge became increasingly common under Mediterranean influence in the centuries either side of the beginning of the Common Era.

Foundations
The floor was prepared using a layer of stones with another layer on top made with beaten clay. If carefully maintained, and often supplemented with layers of fresh straw, this would prevent the house from turning into a quagmire even in the worst rains of winter.

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CELTS

CULT OF DEATH

From human sacrifice to headhunting, the Celts had a ferocious reputation in the ancient world and a vivid vision of the afterlife

Written by **Jack Griffiths**

Prior to the coming of the Romans, the Hallstatt and La Tène cultures flourished in a continental Celtic civilisation that had its heartland in central Europe but branched out as far east as Asia Minor and as far west as Ireland. Although it was a fragmented society made up of clans with no centralised government, one thing the Celts were unified on was the cult of death. Across Europe, this major part of Celtic culture centred on a reverence for human heads and elaborate burial sites. In Britain, Ireland and Gaul (France) especially, a class of people known as druids became the link between the natural and the supernatural. The Celts believed that for a clan to survive and truly prosper, the dead must be properly respected.

The Celtic warrior tradition was very similar to the hero culture that existed in Ancient Greece and Rome, with elite fighters admired as champions and inspirations. It was believed that the spirits of these great heroes lived on after death, with the cult of death based on the idea of a supernatural realm known as the Otherworld. The belief was that once a Celt's mortal body had died, the soul would live on. Elaborate burial sites have been found across Europe with food, weapons and supplies buried along with the dead. These decorated burial grounds are some of the best records of Celtic culture.

The cult of death claimed that the Otherworld was rooted in the physical world, sometimes being described as underground or a far away island. Once in the Otherworld, Celts believed that life after death was happy; it was a paradise filled with feasting and happiness. This is one of the reasons for their renowned ferocity on the battlefield - they weren't afraid of death, and meeting their end by the blade of an enemy sword was something to aspire to. Bravery and recklessness in war were glorified and would be boasted about at every opportunity. To the Romans, the cult of death was nothing short of wild barbarism at its worst, but to the Celts, it was a way of life.

DEATH ON THE BATTLEFIELD

With no fear of dying, the Celts were fierce warriors with an unusual habit

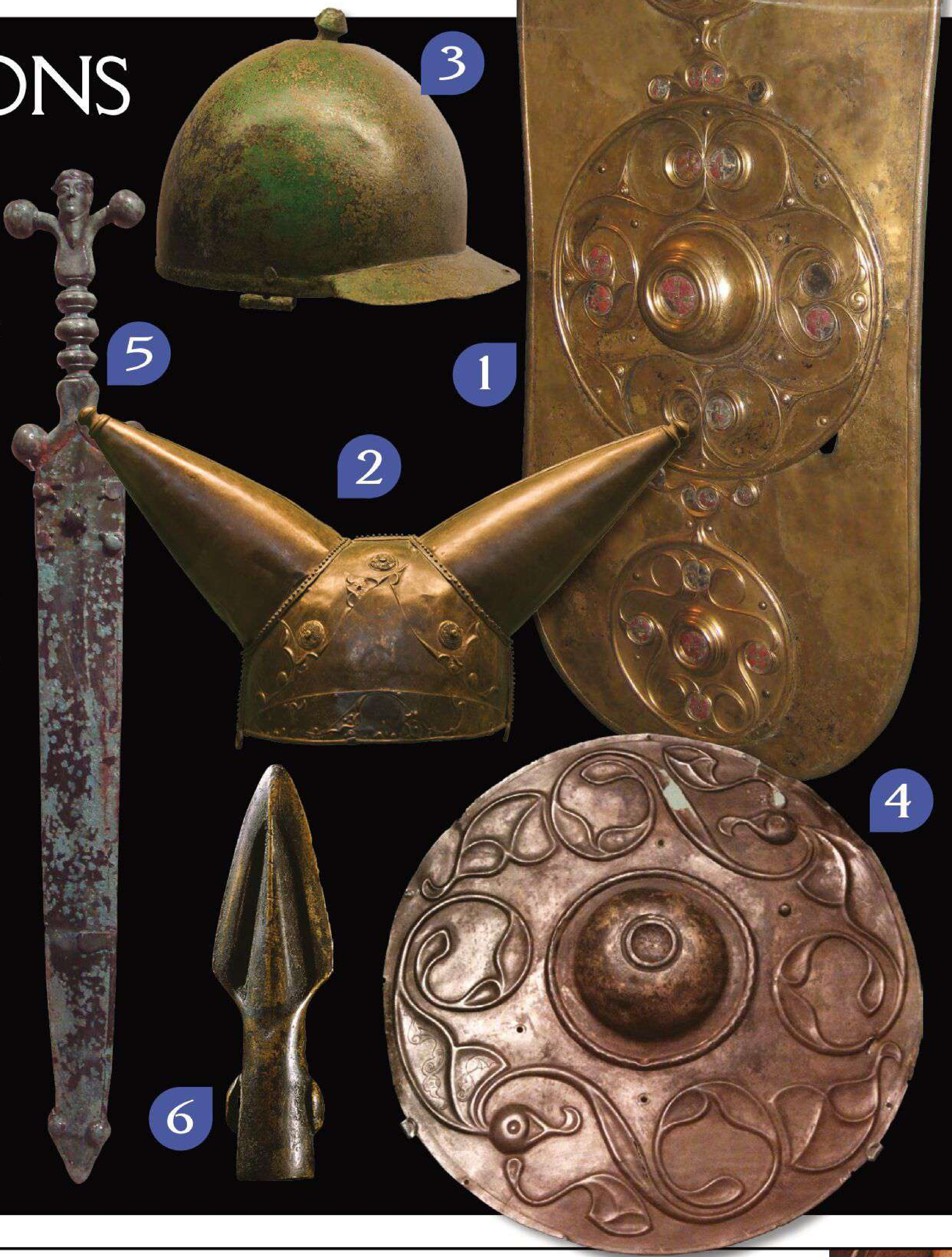
Usually fighting without armour, clad in blue woad war paint and tattoos, and occasionally completely naked, a Celt was a force of nature on the ancient battlefield. Wielding swords, daggers or javelins with a shield, Celtic iron crushed the helmets of the Roman legionaries as war cries rang out and musical instruments were blown. After victory, the Celts set about collecting the heads of both fallen comrades and foes as the headhunting began.

For the Celts, falling on the field of battle wasn't the end. Celtic society had a peculiar obsession with human heads, and after an enemy was defeated, severed heads would be hung by their hair over a horse's neck and taken to be nailed to the entrance of a fort or sanctuary. The suggested notion behind this bizarre tradition was that once the head of a vanquished foe was taken, the Celts believed that the victor would receive the spiritual power of the fallen. The heads were later embalmed and displayed as a sign of victory in battle. According to the Celts, the human soul had an afterlife, and as it lived in the head, this had to be kept at all costs. The body, meanwhile, would be hung from wooden frames and put on show while enemy weapons were broken up and buried as songs of victory filled the air.

The Romans had feared the warlike Celts ever since the Sack of Rome in 390 BCE, but this fear soon changed to a burning desire to see them defeated. When Celts were hired as auxiliary soldiers in the Roman army, knowledge of their passion for beheading became widespread. Unlike the Romans, who were an efficient and organised fighting force, the Celts were more flamboyant. Stories tell of one Celtic ruler who drove a chariot made entirely out of silver into battle. The obsession with headhunting didn't end with the Celts and continued in small pockets of Ireland up until the Middle Ages, even as Christianity spread over the Emerald Isle.

CELTIC WEAPONS

The Bronze and Iron Ages witnessed a huge influx of new weaponry for use in both battle and burials



1 Battersea Shield
Constructed from bronze sheets and 27 red glass studs, the Battersea Shield was made in Britain between 350 and 50 BCE. Although it is believed to be from the La Tène period, it is difficult to date exactly as its decorative style is not related to any other Celtic object.

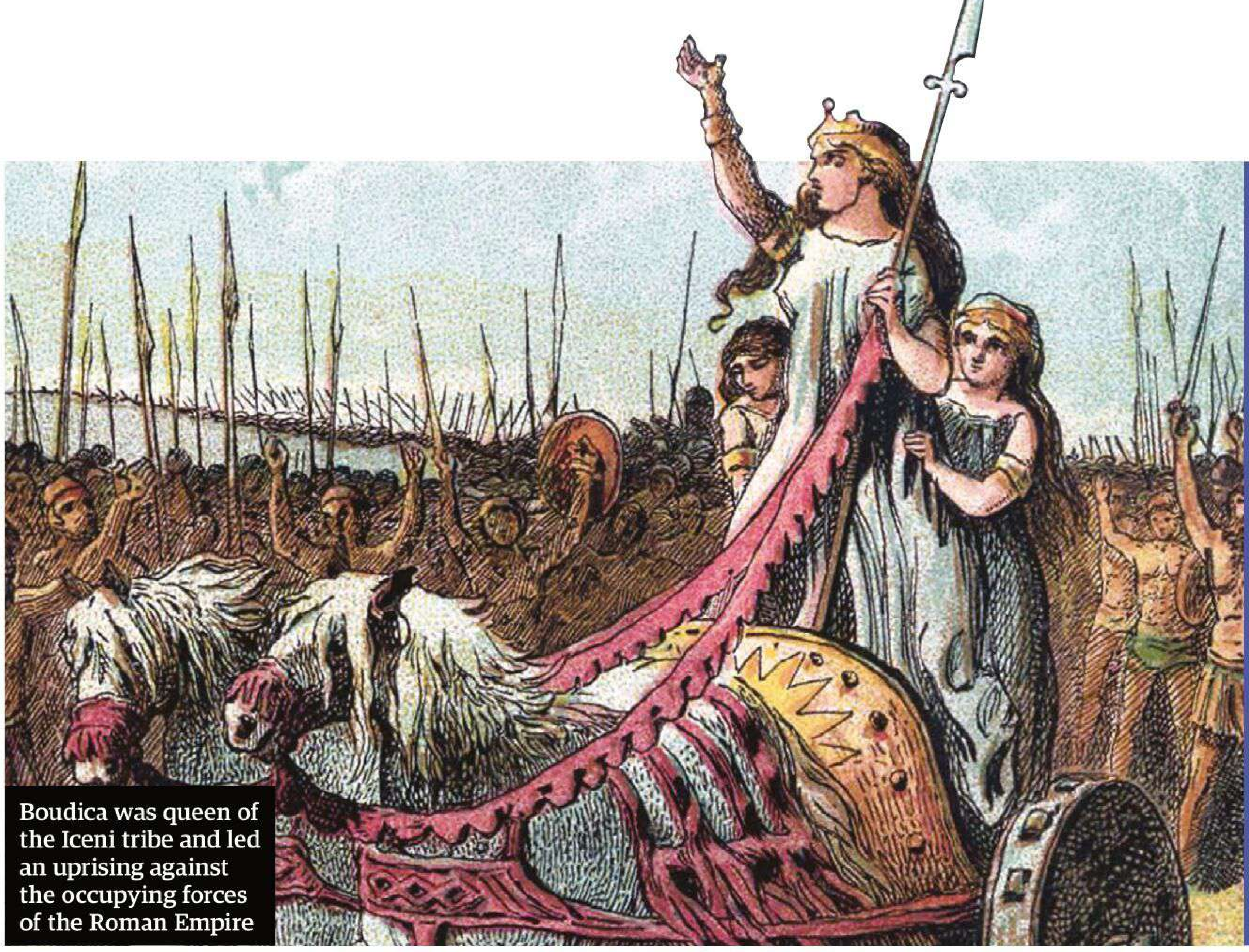
2 Waterloo Helmet
This helmet dates from around 250-50 BCE and its bronze material means it was far too fragile to have been used in warfare. Instead it is believed that it was used as a ceremonial headdress. It is the only Iron Age helm of its type to have ever been found in Europe.

3 Montefortino helmet
The classic choices of the Roman legionaries, both the Montefortino and Coolus helmets were originally Celtic designs. The conical-shaped headgear was the helmet of choice for the Gauls and first appeared in about 400 BCE. Once the Romans and the Carthaginians got their hands on them, they were mass produced.

4 Wandsworth Shield boss
The Celts were big users of shields in battle, usually instead of armour. The shields tended to be oval in shape and could be both wooden and metallic. The boss at the centre of the design was a metal cup used to protect the hand when holding the shield.

5 Celtic Iron Sword
Celtic warriors were expert swordsmen and the quality design of their weapons matched their proficiency with a blade. The large iron swords could be up to 90 centimetres in length and were wielded with two hands. Smaller swords also existed that could be used to slice and dice while also carrying a shield.

6 Spears and javelins
The sharp leaf-shaped iron heads were attached to an ash wood pole and thrown at enemy infantry. The first contact with Roman armies persuaded the Celts to narrow the spearheads to be able to puncture legionary armour. They would be collected at the end of the battle along with the heads.



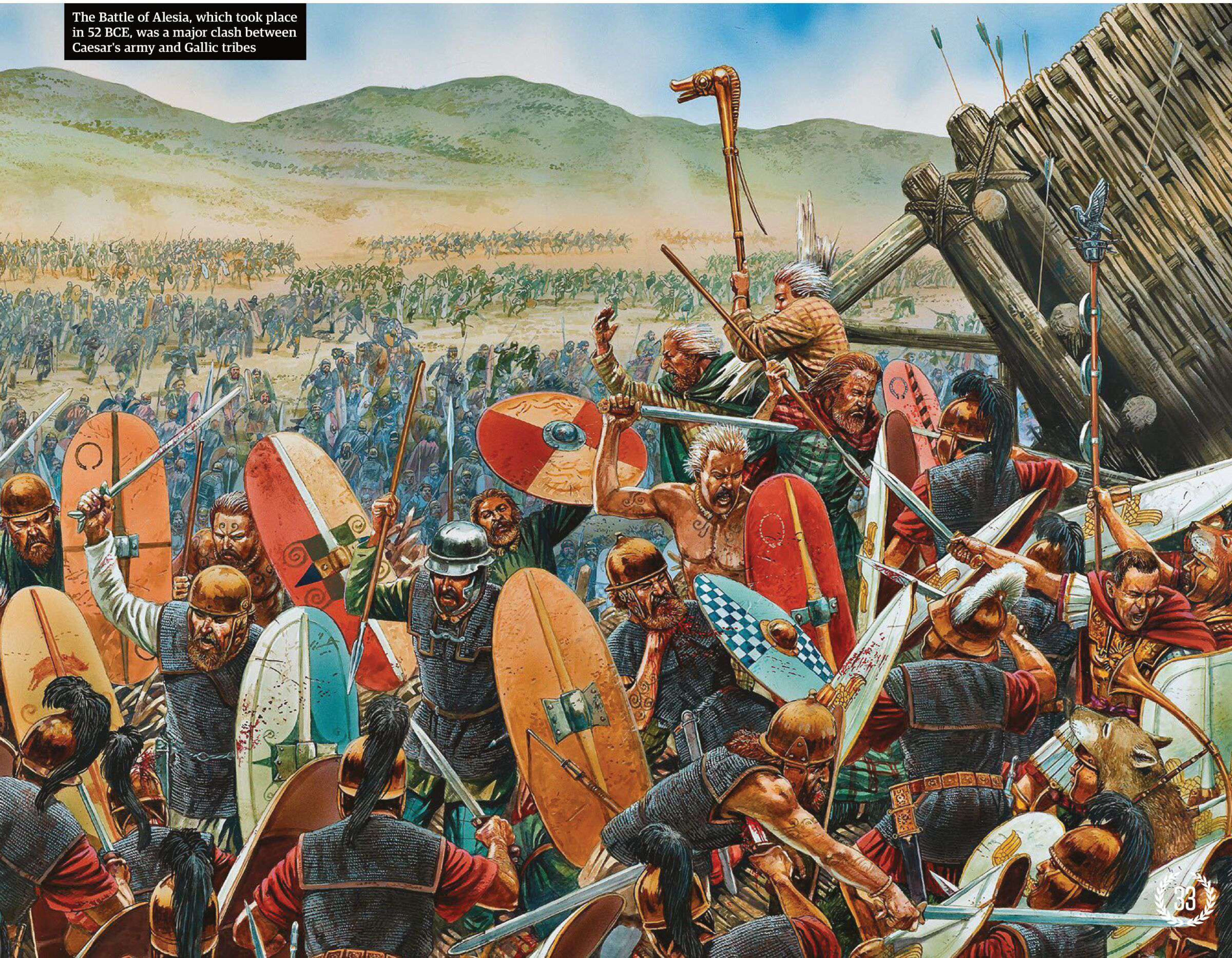
Boudica was queen of the Iceni tribe and led an uprising against the occupying forces of the Roman Empire

WOMEN WARRIORS

Both on the front line and in peacetime society, women played a huge role as warriors and queens

The Celts were leagues ahead of their counterpart ancient civilisations in gender equality, allowing females to be both warriors and queens, as the likes of Boudica and Cartimandua demonstrate. Although men held the ultimate power, the political freedom and lawful protection given to women was unparalleled compared with Greek and Roman lands. Classical Roman authors were notoriously fearful of the Celtic women as they fought as hard in battle as men. Girls were trained in the arts of war as much as boys, and would learn how to carry weaponry, fight off invaders and even lead their own fighting schools. The Iceni from southeastern England were one of the most prominent tribes to use women in battle as they drove the Romans out of Londinium.

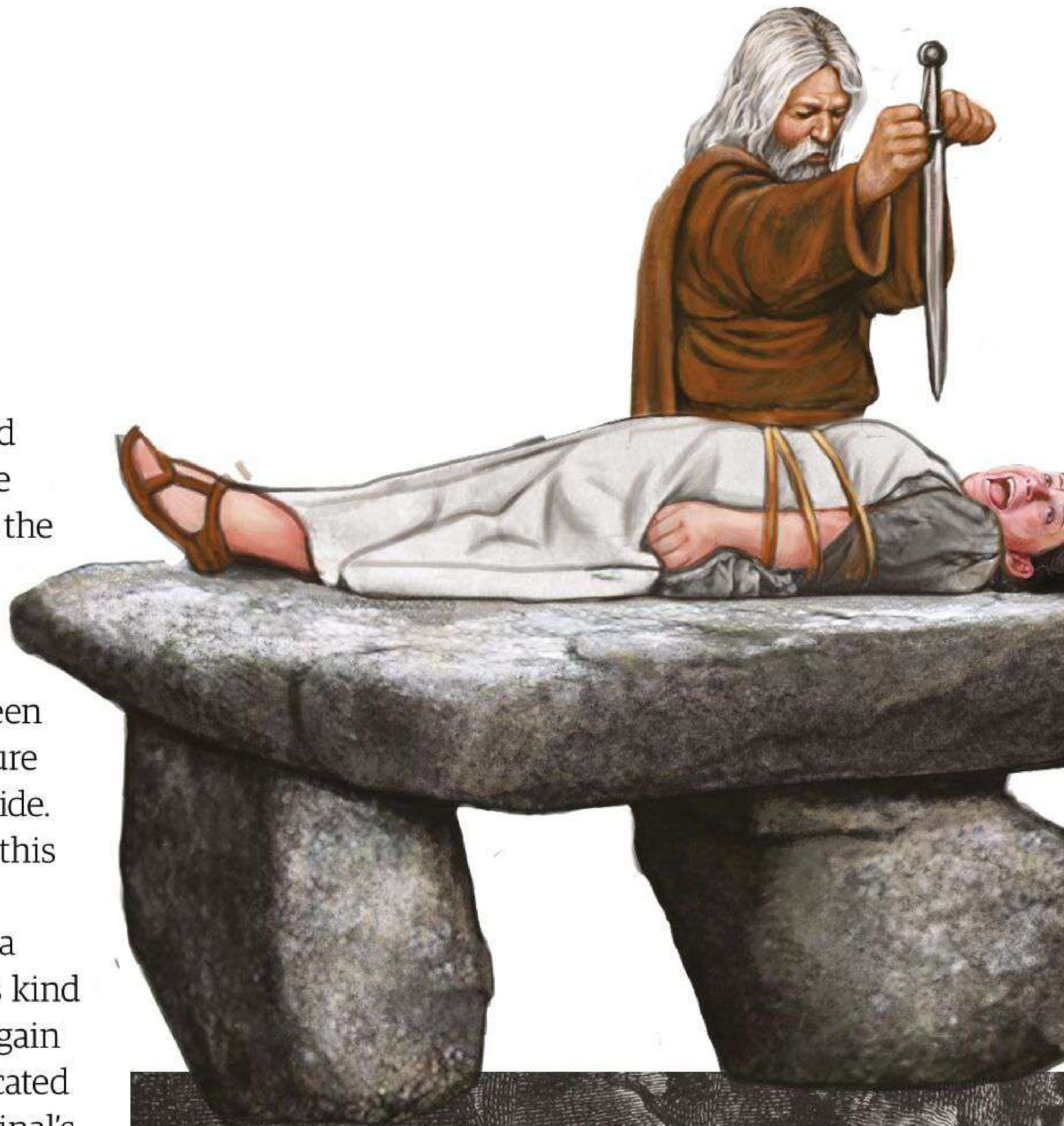
Women were also important in spiritual ways. They could become druids and were not excluded from any occupation. Celtic mythology told of a Land of Women. This island formed part of the conception of the afterlife and, according to the Roman writers Posidonius and Strabo, was a place where men could not go for fear of death as women literally ripped each other apart.



The Battle of Alesia, which took place in 52 BCE, was a major clash between Caesar's army and Gallic tribes

SACRIFICE

Mythology and the role of gods meant so much to the Celts that sacrificial ceremonies were commonplace



The spiritual gesture of headhunting was only one part of the cult of death. Once the skulls had been removed from the battlefield, it was over to the druids to perform elaborate rituals, including sacrificial offerings. The Celts believed sacrifice encouraged the supernatural world to link with the natural, and this is what kept them performing these rituals.

While there is some debate about whether human sacrifice actually took place, it is referenced by the Roman writers of the era and druidic practice was banned under Emperor Claudius after the successful invasion of Britain. It was written that in one form of human sacrifice, the victim's head would be severed from the body and then the skull completely shattered. This was done to prevent the ghost from wandering free after death.

However, the Celts worshipped a number of gods, and each demanded a different form of sacrificial offering. For instance, those sacrificed to the god of the willow, Esus, would be hanged; those killed in the name of Taranis, the thunder god, would be immolated; those murdered for Toutatis, the god of the people, were drowned. But perhaps the most infamous form of sacrifice in the cult of death was the Wicker Man. Featured in one of Julius Caesar's most well known writings on the Celts' death culture in a tale that has been exaggerated over time, the large wicker structure was burned as an effigy with living people inside. It was supposedly an offering to the gods, but this theory has been disputed.

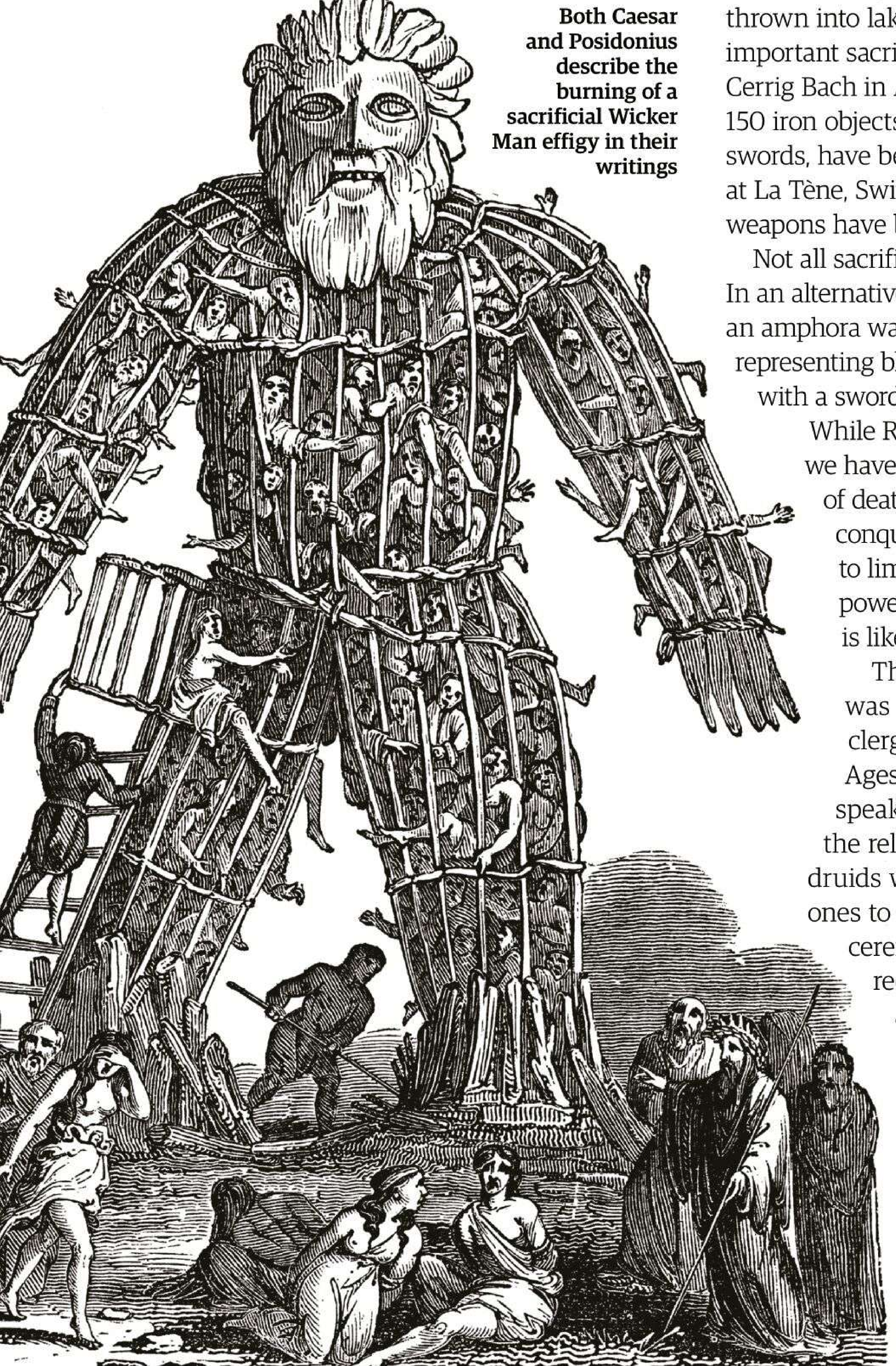
This aspect of the cult of death also offered a way of punishing criminals. Executions of this kind were carried out during a festival and would again vary depending on which god they were dedicated to. One popular punishment was to cut a criminal's stomach open before hanging them from an oak branch in a temple roof.

It wasn't just humans that could be sacrificed in the cult of death. Animals were readily slaughtered if the Celts thought it would appease the gods, and material goods were also destroyed by being thrown into lakes and rivers. One of the most important sacrificial pits ever found is at Llyn Cerrig Bach in Anglesey, Wales, where more than 150 iron objects, including spears, shields and swords, have been unearthed. There is also a site at La Tène, Switzerland, where huge amounts of weapons have been dredged from Lake Neuchâtel.

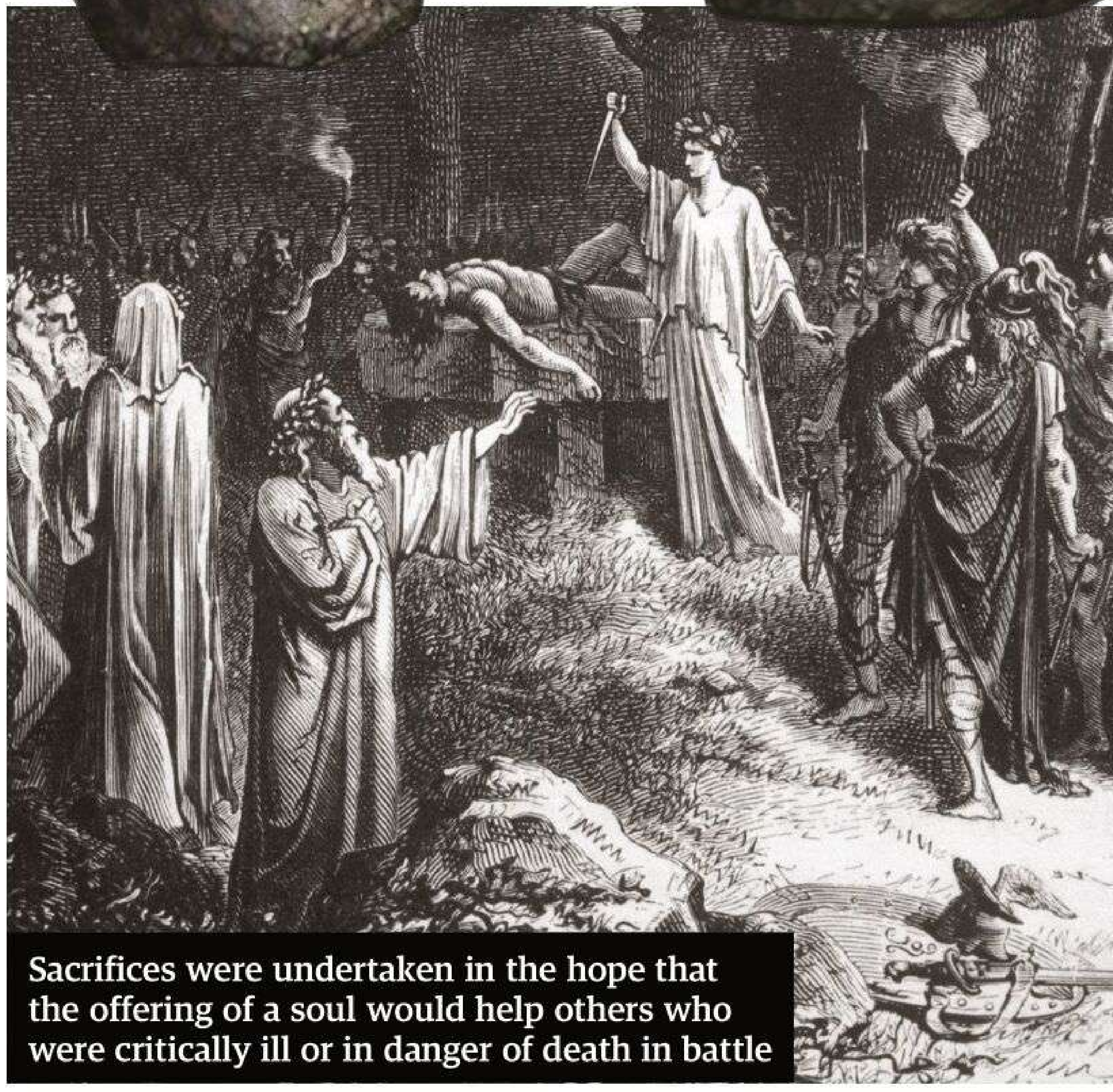
Not all sacrifices required bloodshed and loss. In an alternative to human and animal sacrifice, an amphora was filled to the brim with wine – representing blood – and then the top was cut off with a sword to emulate a decapitation.

While Roman writings are the best sources we have on druidism and sacrifice in the cult of death, it is well known that in order to conquer the Celts, the Romans attempted to limit the influence of the exceptionally powerful druids. Therefore, their portrayal is likely as scathing as possible.

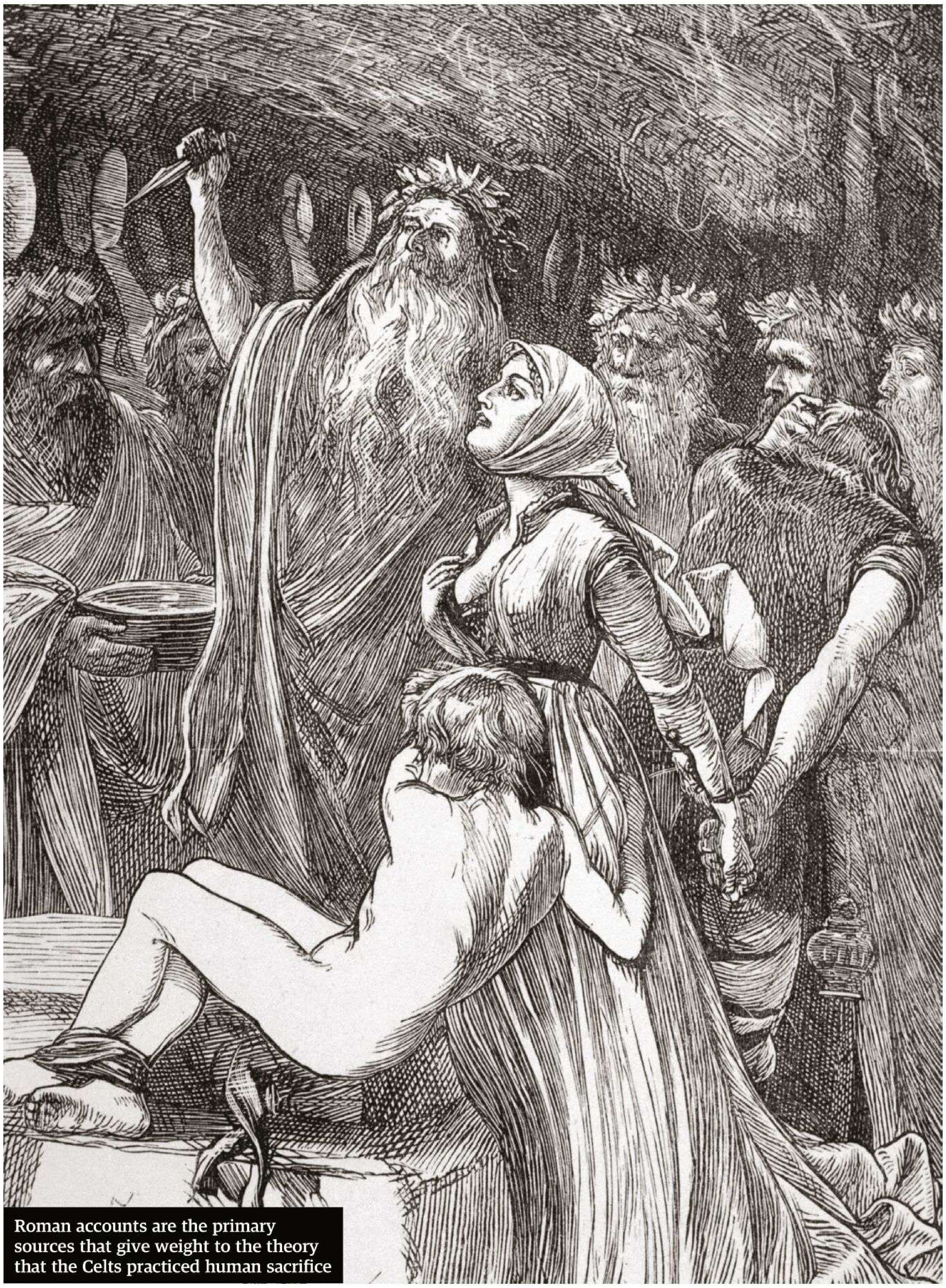
The druids' elevated status in society was a precursor to what the Christian clergy would become in the Middle Ages, and they had the rare ability to speak before kings while in council. As the religious class in Celtic society, the druids would have most likely been the ones to carry out sacrifices, as well as other ceremonies. One of the craziest rituals recorded by the Romans was known as 'Bull Sleep', which involved a person being fed bull flesh and then sleeping wrapped in its hide. When they awoke, they would know who would be the next king.



Both Caesar and Posidonius describe the burning of a sacrificial Wicker Man effigy in their writings



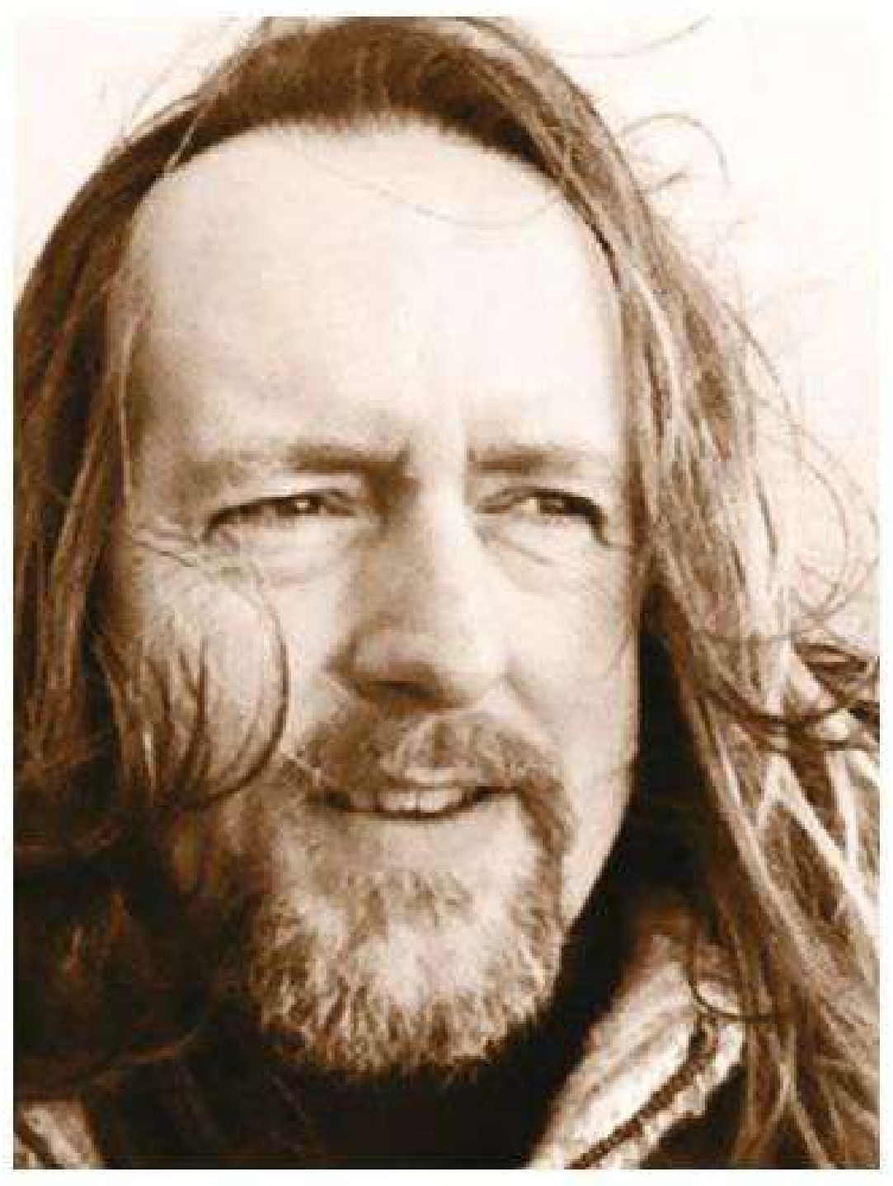
Sacrifices were undertaken in the hope that the offering of a soul would help others who were critically ill or in danger of death in battle



Roman accounts are the primary sources that give weight to the theory that the Celts practiced human sacrifice

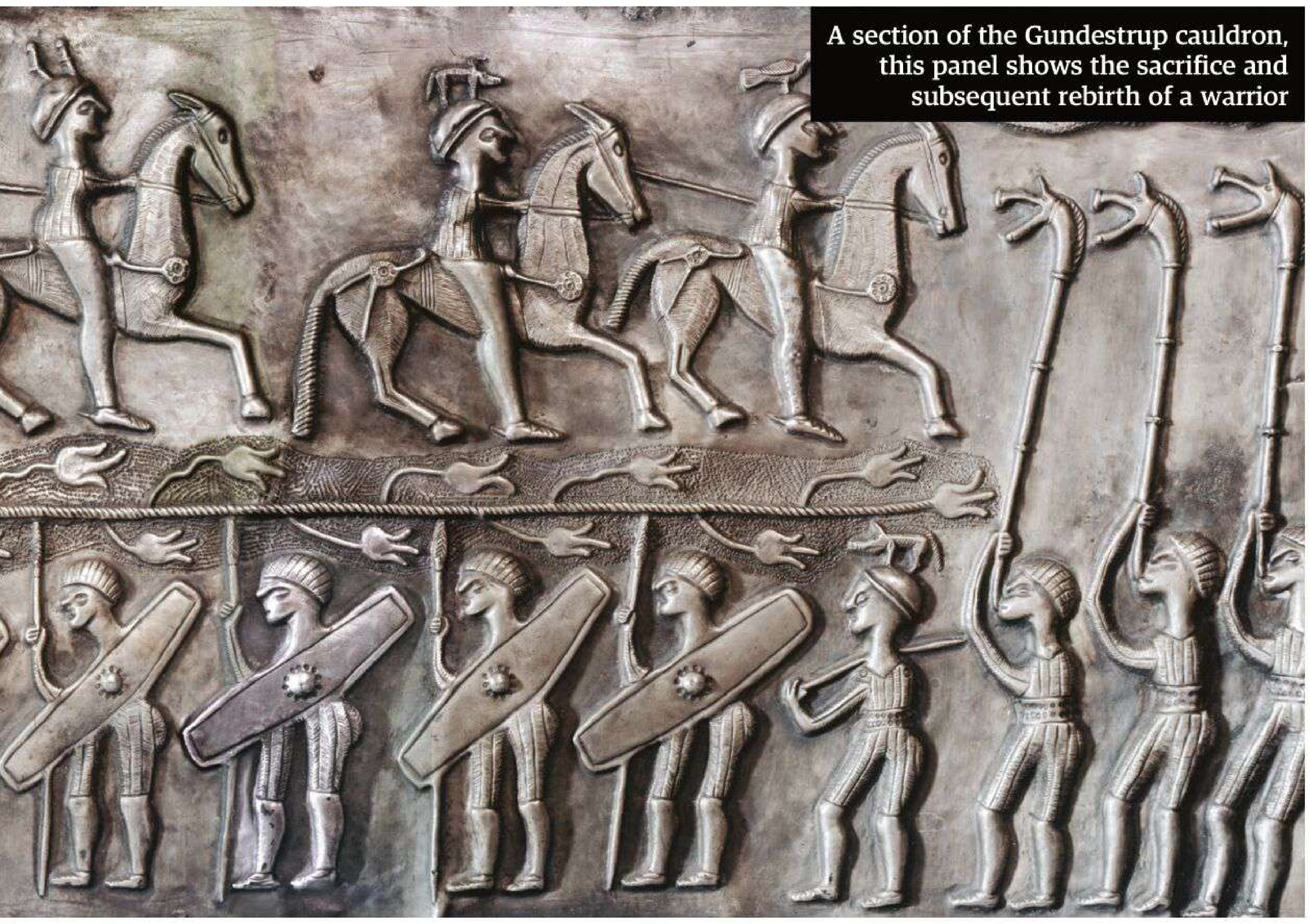
DID DRUIDS PRACTISE HUMAN SACRIFICE?

Dr Andrew Jennings, UHI Centre for Nordic Studies

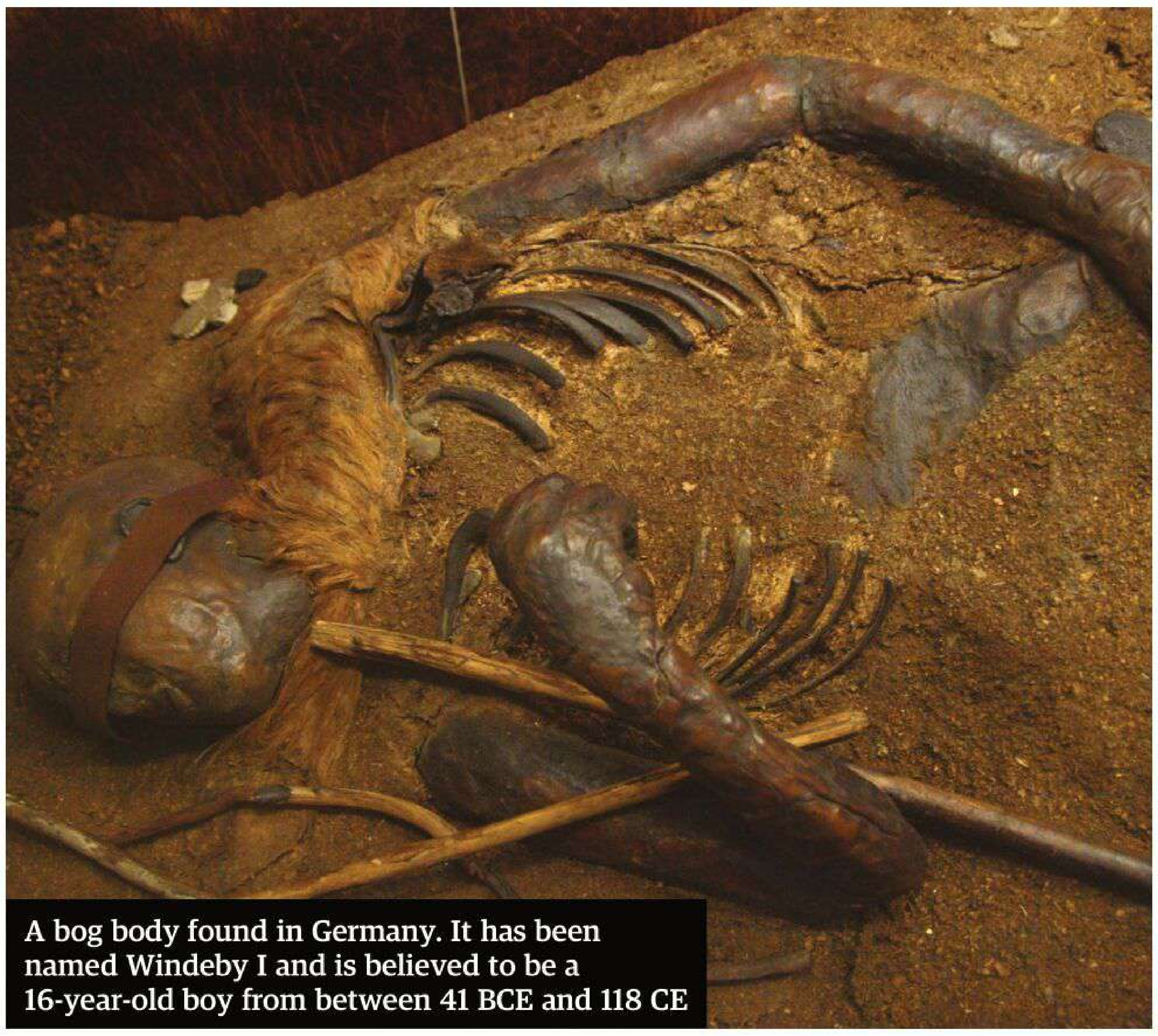


There is no reason to doubt Caesar's claim that the druids carried out human sacrifice. Life was offered to the gods in return for life. So someone afflicted with a serious disease or a warrior fighting a battle would offer a human sacrifice in return for their life, and the druids would carry it out. An animal was no substitute and criminals were pleasing to the gods, but if they were in short supply, the innocent would do. However, we don't know what the Celtic gods wanted the spirits of the sacrificed for.

Caesar also tells us about that most gruesome of sacrifice the Wicker Man, where an immense statue of twigs was filled with victims and set alight. He also remarks that druidism originated in Britain, so it's no surprise to hear from Tacitus that blood-soaked altars existed among the British Celts. Further afield, the Galatians, a Celtic people who settled in Turkey, reportedly sacrificed their prisoners after a battle in 165 BCE. The Celts were not odd for carrying out human sacrifice. Tollund Man, a Danish bog body, is mummified proof that the contemporary Germanic peoples did it too.



A section of the Gundestrup cauldron, this panel shows the sacrifice and subsequent rebirth of a warrior



A bog body found in Germany. It has been named Windeby I and is believed to be a 16-year-old boy from between 41 BCE and 118 CE

FUNERALS AND THE AFTERLIFE

Celtic burials were ceremonial affairs that prepared the deceased for the next life

Size and structure
The burial grounds would be approximately 50 metres in diameter and six metres deep, but this depended on the importance of the individual. The structure consisted of wooden walls and a layer of stones that would be covered by sod.

The corpse
The body would be made up to look its best for the Otherworld. The dead from noble backgrounds would be dressed in the smartest clothes they owned, while the poor would be covered and wrapped up in cloth.

Drinking culture
As well as food and equipment, beverages and drinking vessels were buried as tradition. In one tomb alone, 1,100 litres of wine were taken underground. Gravediggers sometimes targeted Celtic burial grounds and huge amounts of drink could be a valuable find.

Location of the body
The corpse would always be laid horizontally. Depending on social status, this would be on the base of the carriage within the burial ground or on a sort of raised bronze platform.

The carriage
Often one of the main components of a Celtic tomb, the carriage would be present at burials of kings and queens and other members of the richer elite. It contained jewellery, weapons, tools and other instruments needed for the Otherworld.

Celtic funerals were held in areas that were considered sacred, like woodland groves and natural springs. The Iron Age is when we begin to find evidence for the burial of ordinary people. Prior to this, burial was reserved for the elite, who were placed in elaborate tombs rather than the hole-in-the-ground graves that became the norm during the Celtic period.

Many Celts, both on the continent and in Britain, embraced the new Roman culture thrust upon them, initiating what was known as the Gallo-Roman period. This had effects on funeral ceremonies, which were now undertaken in temples known as 'fanums' built on sacred ground. These culture differences, plus the fact that the Celts were not a centralised society, means Celtic religious views are less well known than other ancient civilisations.

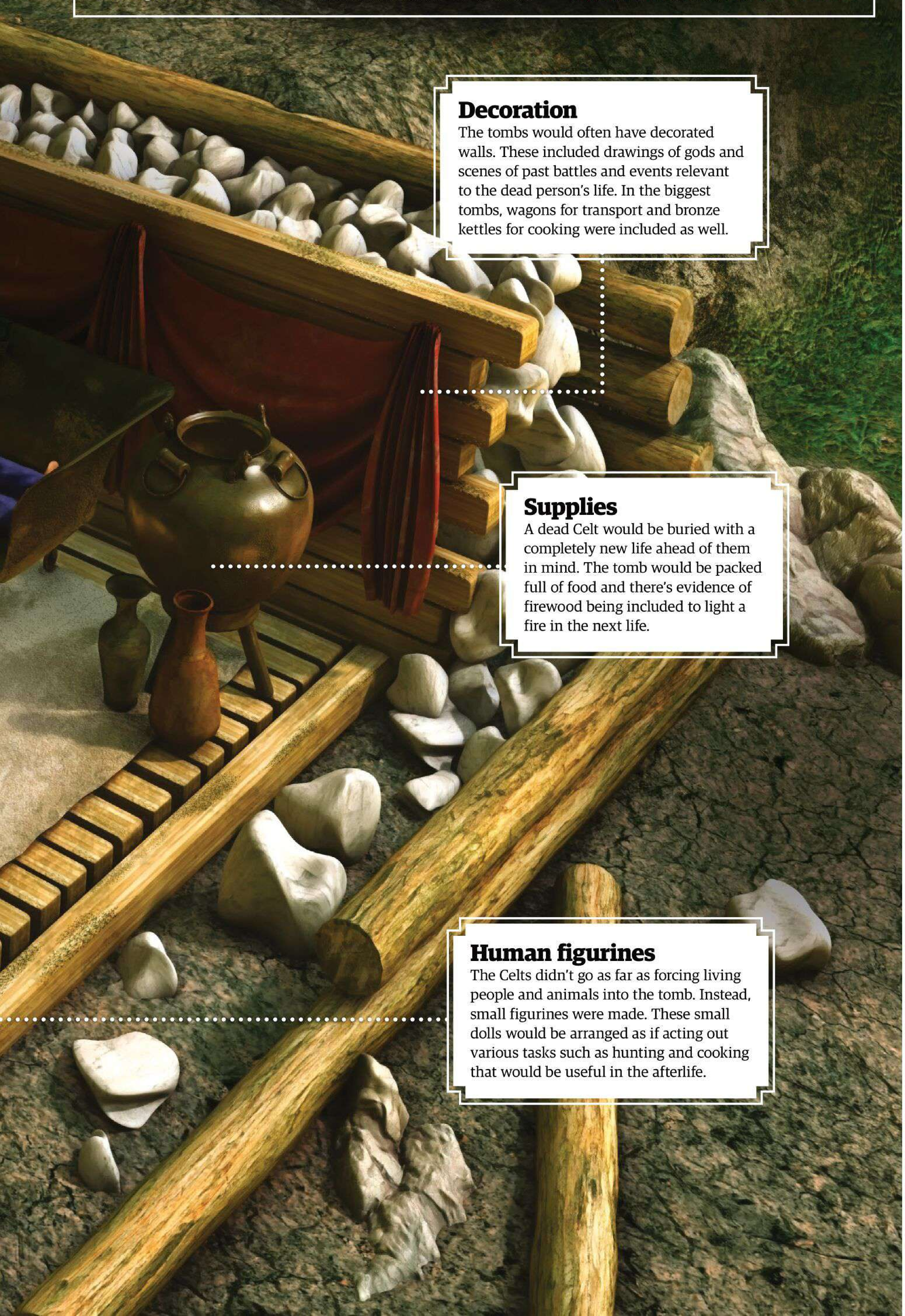
Like the Nordic Valhalla and the Ancient Greek underworld, the Celts had their own theories on life after death. The Otherworld was believed to look like a group of islands in the sea and was also called the 'Delightful Plain' or 'Land of the Young'. Here there was no sickness, old age or death, and happiness lasted forever. The journey to the Otherworld was mentioned in Irish tales and tells of a beautiful girl sailing a hero away on a boat of glass. Waterfalls were believed to have been the main access points to the Otherworld and, as a result, gifts were left by them or thrown into them as offerings to the gods. The spiritual power of waterfalls was believed to be so great that streams had the power to heal injury. Tales told of the transmigration of these immortal souls include those of 'Fintan', who lived as a man, a stag and an eagle and the two great Bulls of Erin, who became sacred after a rebirth from human form. These epic stories motivated the Celts to continue ritualistic practices and give their all in battle.

From the highest rungs of society to the lowest, Celts expected to keep their status when they went to the Otherworld. By having their proudest and most important belongings buried with them, their transportation would be made as smooth as possible. Some of the most important items to be buried with the Celts were their weapons. In Celtic burial sites across Europe, helmets, shields, daggers and axes have been found, all of which are intricately designed. The equipment itself wasn't made of material as sturdy as would be found on the Iron Age battlefield and is believed to have been for more of a ceremonial use and for the dead to take with them on their journey to the afterlife.

There is one part of the Celtic cult of death that survives in a form today, and that is Samhain. One of the influences for the contemporary celebration of Halloween, the festival occurred on 31 October, or harvest's end. The tradition was to extinguish the fire in the home and light a communal fire in the village. Here, druids told that the boundaries to the Otherworld were temporarily closed and the spirits could mix with the living. Masks and costumes were worn, influencing the costumes we see during Halloween celebrations today.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE CELTS?

Celtic culture disintegrated during and after the end of the Roman Empire. Germanic tribes ransacked the dwindling empire and the Celts were forced to retreat to small pockets of Ireland, Scotland, Wales and Brittany in France. The Roman Catholic Church had a huge say in the dissolution and memory of Celtic culture. Druidism is believed to have left the history books by approximately 700 CE before continuing briefly underground. When Catholicism took over the British Isles, pagan sites were turned into cathedrals and the pagan gods were either forgotten or became associated with saints. Breton, Manx, Welsh and Erse Gaelic languages still survive in areas of the British Isles and Europe in some way, ensuring that the traditional customs and culture of the Celts lives on.



Decoration

The tombs would often have decorated walls. These included drawings of gods and scenes of past battles and events relevant to the dead person's life. In the biggest tombs, wagons for transport and bronze kettles for cooking were included as well.

Supplies

A dead Celt would be buried with a completely new life ahead of them in mind. The tomb would be packed full of food and there's evidence of firewood being included to light a fire in the next life.

Human figurines

The Celts didn't go as far as forcing living people and animals into the tomb. Instead, small figurines were made. These small dolls would be arranged as if acting out various tasks such as hunting and cooking that would be useful in the afterlife.

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CAESAR'S INVASION OF BRITAIN

He was Rome's greatest ever military commander, but there was one remote corner of Europe that he'd never manage to conquer

Written by **Nick Soldinger**

In the 1st century BCE, Britain was an island that sat right on the edge of the so-called civilised world. It was a dark, uncharted place whose inhabitants were said to be half-beast, blue-painted savages who practised human sacrifice and wore the heads of their slaughtered enemies upon their belts. To most Romans, Britannia – as they called it – was a nightmarish netherworld that was best left in the shadows.

But Julius Caesar wasn't like most Romans. In August 55 BCE, having fought his way across present-day France conquering much of what was then called Gaul, Rome's rising superstar stood on the shore at Boulogne and stared across the English Channel. On a clear day, it's just possible to see the coast of Kent from there. For Caesar, the great gambler, the unknown land on the horizon was a tantalising prospect. Yes, landing there would be risky – dangerous, even. And with his intelligence officers struggling to locate a single person who could reveal what monsters might be found there, he'd be going in blind. But he was Julius Caesar, and he was destined for greatness. The gods themselves had told him as much.

The official argument that Caesar gave for the mission he then began to plot was that it would prevent any potential resupply from Britannia to his recently defeated Celtic opponents in Gaul. But the real reason was much simpler: it was because he was greedy. Caesar was eager not just for plunder, but for adventure, knowledge, fame and, ultimately, power.

On the morning of 23 August he loaded 12,000 troops onto 98 galleys and set sail for the smudge on the horizon. As he and his army drew closer, that smudge became ever brighter, rising out of the sea until the men from the Mediterranean were staring at an impenetrable barrier – brilliant white cliffs, 100 metres high.

Caesar ordered his armada to drop anchor in the Dover Straits and await the ships carrying his waylaid cavalry. His troops lounged on deck for hours until somebody shouted – movement had been spotted on land. His men then all stood and watched aghast as the cliff tops hovering above them began to fill with thousands of blue-painted warriors, their sharp spear points gleaming in the brilliant sunshine.

CAESAR'S RISE TO POWER

100 BCE
Gaius Julius Caesar is born in the slums of Rome. Despite being of noble birth, his family has long since lost its wealth and power.

78 BCE
After six years of distinguished military service, Caesar finds fame after hunting down pirates that once kidnapped him, killing them all.

65 BCE
Caesar stands for election as pontifex maximus – a senior political position voted for by Roman citizens. He borrows a fortune and buys the vote.

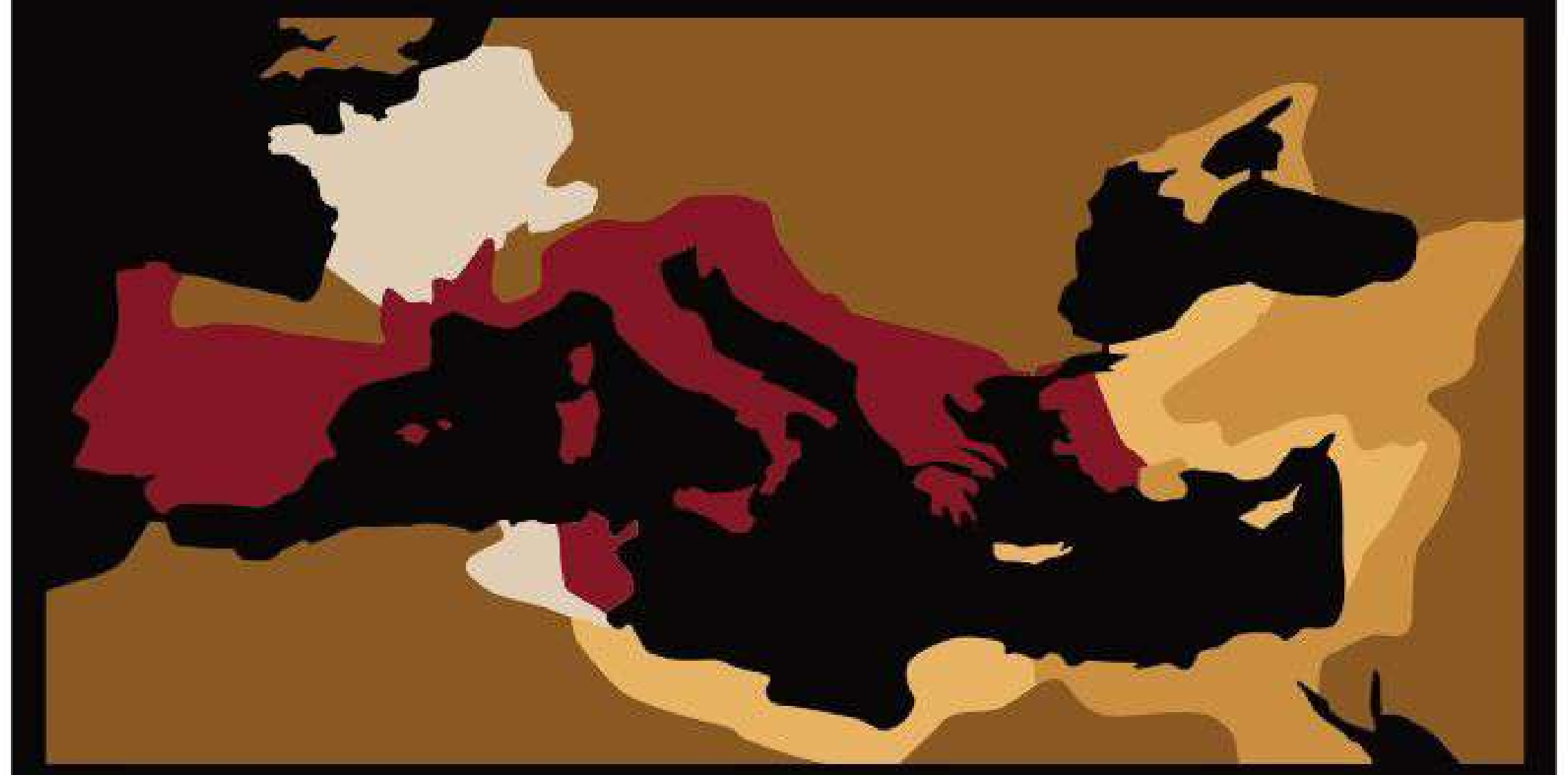
60 BCE
Caesar enters into a pact with Rome's richest man, Crassus, and most powerful military leader, Pompey. They ensure he is elected as consul.

58 BCE
After two years in Rome's highest elected office, Caesar invades Gaul. He aims to make himself as rich as Crassus and as powerful as Pompey.

THE FIRST INVASION

Caesar found that a raid of Britain meant struggling not only against the island's inhabitants, but also its weather

ROMAN CONQUESTS



- 🟥 Roman Republic 63 BCE
- ⬜ Caesar's conquests 44 BCE
- 🟧 Pompey's Conquests 58 BCE
- 🟫 Vassal States

On 26 August 55 BCE, Caesar gave the order for Roman troops to land on British soil for the first time. Having waited for hours near Dover for his cavalry to arrive, he decided to go ashore without them. Ordering his fleet northeast, he found a suitable beach six miles away at Deal. The entire time he was watched from land by the army the Britons had sent to meet him, following him to the shingle shoreline he now anchored his galleys off.

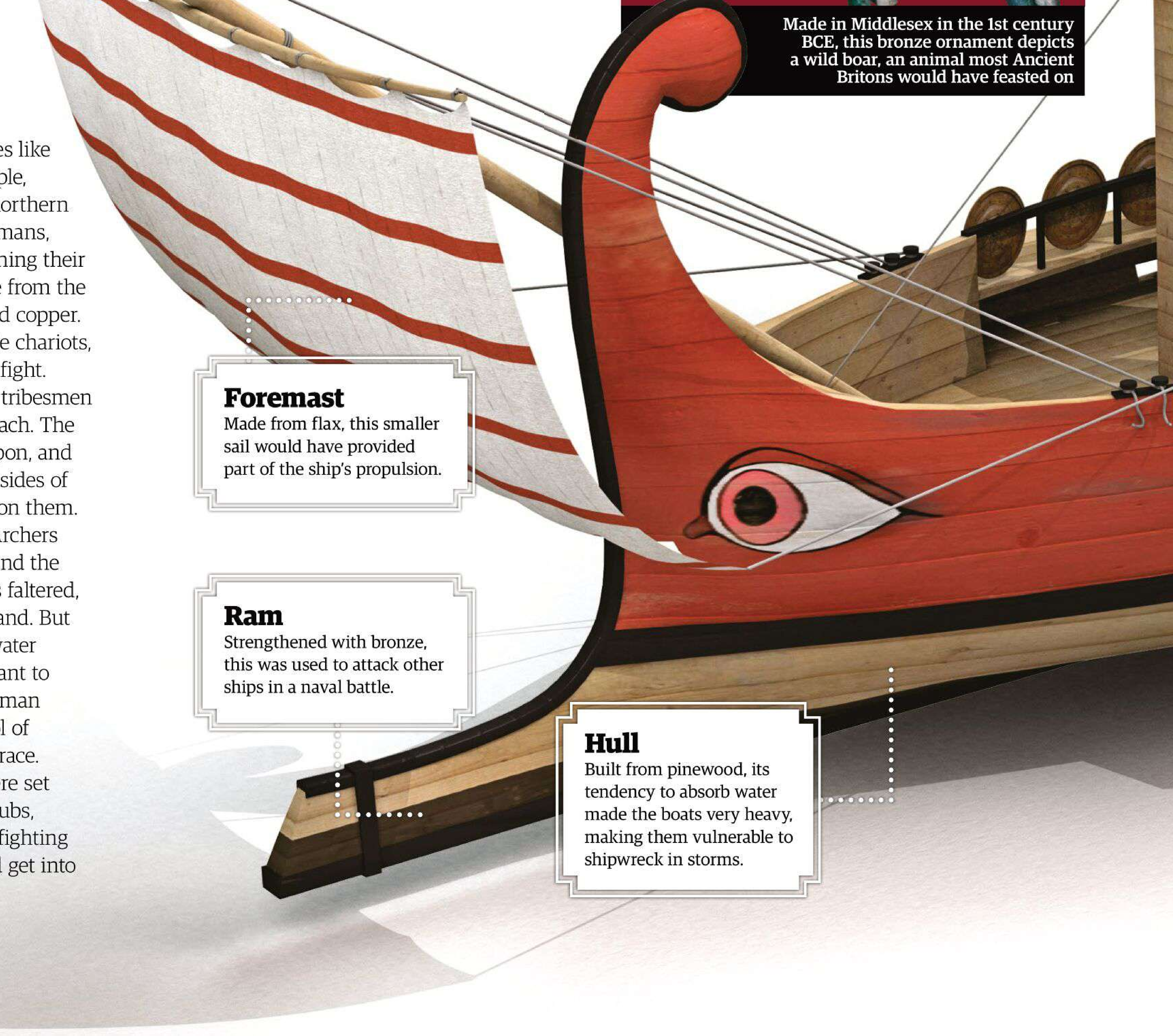
Caesar could now see his new enemy up close. Although often mistakenly described as Celtic, these Ancient Britons weren't related to the Indo-European tribes like the Gauls. These were an indigenous people, genetically connected to the Basques of northern Spain. Standing a head taller than the Romans, the warriors wore very little, instead adorning their bodies with blue war paint possibly made from the plant woad, but much more likely oxidised copper. Some were on horseback, others in nimble chariots, the rest on foot. All, though, had come to fight.

As the Romans tried to disembark, the tribesmen made good use of the stones on Deal's beach. The slingshot was their primary hunting weapon, and as Caesar's legionaries struggled over the sides of their galleys, stone missiles rained down on them.

Caesar ordered a barrage in response. Archers drove the defending slingers backwards and the way to shore was clear, but still his troops faltered, spooked by the warriors who waited on land. But then a standard bearer jumped into the water shouting: "Leap down men, unless you want to abandon the eagle to the enemy." To a Roman soldier, his legion's standard was a symbol of martial pride, and its loss a profound disgrace. So, the legionaries followed him. They were set upon as soon as they were ashore with clubs, spears and swords. Savage hand-to-hand fighting ensued before the battered Romans could get into formation and repel the wild attacks.

With a beachhead established, Caesar set up camp. Still without cavalry, his options were limited. His 500 mounted troops should have set sail that morning but had been penned in by the tides. It would be four days before they'd attempt the crossing, but a sudden violent squall forced them back to Gaul, destroying many of the ships at Deal in the process. Caesar was stranded. Lacking supplies to repair their ships, the Romans ventured inland to scavenge. It was deadly work. The men were ambushed constantly by an enemy that struck as suddenly as it vanished.

Three weeks of relentless rain followed, grinding down the spirits of the Mediterranean invaders as they desperately patched up their ships. When the weather lifted, a huge force descended on them. "A battle followed," Caesar wrote, "and the enemy, unable to stand long against the onset of our troops, turned and fled." The Britons were not a literate people and their version of events has long since faded. Whether Caesar's account is accurate or propaganda is unclear. However, come the next morning, his entire army was back in Gaul.



Foremast
Made from flax, this smaller sail would have provided part of the ship's propulsion.

Ram
Strengthened with bronze, this was used to attack other ships in a naval battle.

Hull
Built from pinewood, its tendency to absorb water made the boats very heavy, making them vulnerable to shipwreck in storms.

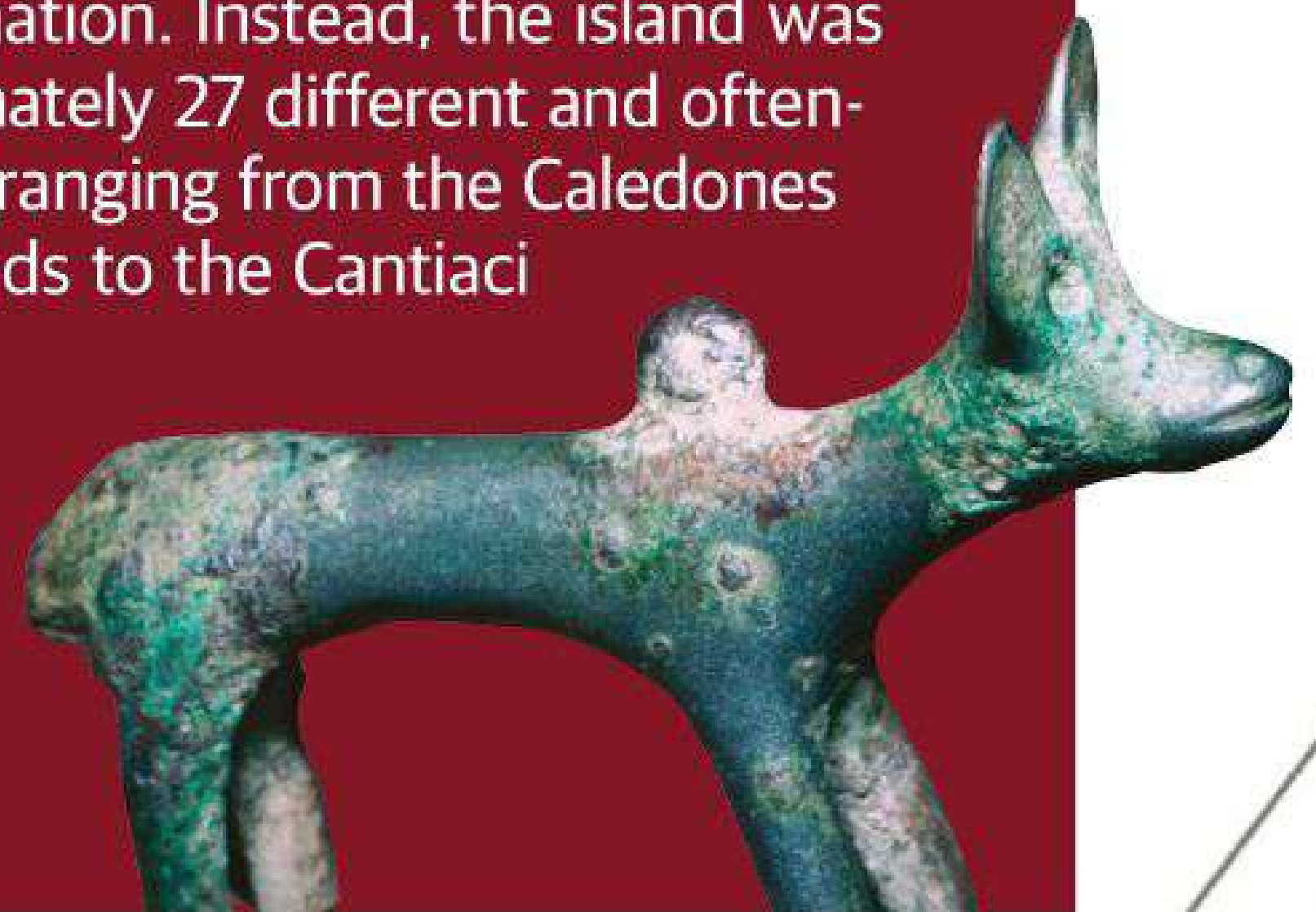
THE ANCIENT BRITONS

The brutish, half-naked people Caesar met appeared to be savages, but their warrior society was surprisingly sophisticated

The term 'Celtic' was first used to describe pre-Roman Britain in the 18th century, and has been used, erroneously, in popular culture ever since. The Iron-Age inhabitants of the British Isles weren't Celtic in origin at all, but indigenous – the Celts being the so-called barbarian tribes that dominated much of mainland Europe. They also weren't, despite the horror stories that circulated about them in Rome, uncivilised savages.

Ancient Britain was a fertile land rich in minerals, and mining and farming were carving up the countryside in a way we would recognise today. Great hill forts peppered the landscape, keeping watch over the neatly ploughed fields. Behind their terraced stockades, embryonic towns complete with streets, places of worship, forges and workshops were mushrooming. From the latter came spectacular metalwork, not just swords and spears, but intricately adorned jewellery, hunting horns and mirrors.

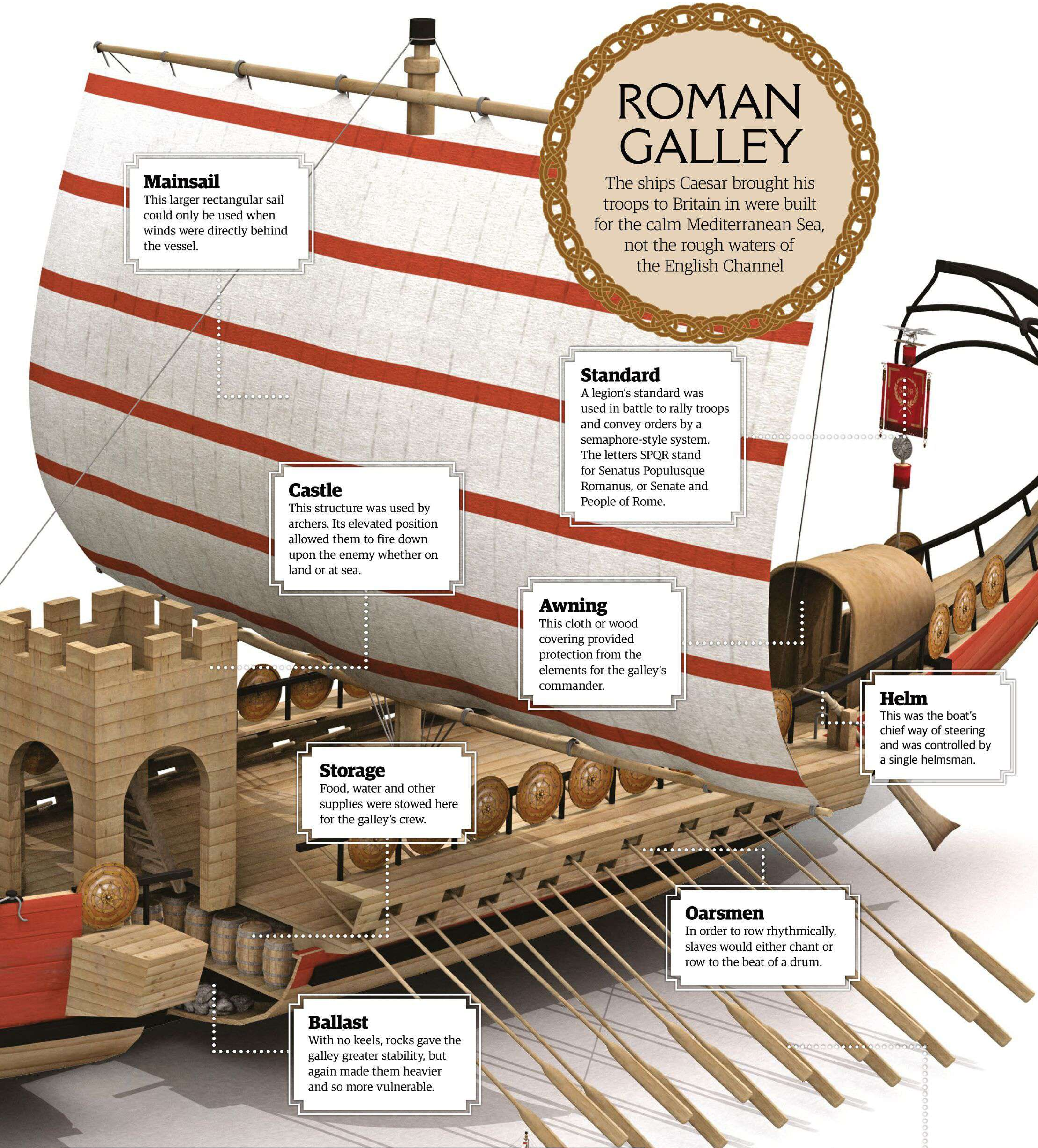
The ancient Britons also weren't, in any modern sense of the word, a nation. Instead, the island was inhabited by approximately 27 different and often-warring tribal groups, ranging from the Caledones in the Scottish highlands to the Cantiaci in Kent, who Caesar had encountered, with each tribe led by a warrior king or queen.



Made in Middlesex in the 1st century BCE, this bronze ornament depicts a wild boar, an animal most Ancient Britons would have feasted on

ROMAN GALLEY

The ships Caesar brought his troops to Britain in were built for the calm Mediterranean Sea, not the rough waters of the English Channel



Mainsail
This larger rectangular sail could only be used when winds were directly behind the vessel.

Standard
A legion's standard was used in battle to rally troops and convey orders by a semaphore-style system. The letters SPQR stand for Senatus Populusque Romanus, or Senate and People of Rome.

Castle
This structure was used by archers. Its elevated position allowed them to fire down upon the enemy whether on land or at sea.

Awning
This cloth or wood covering provided protection from the elements for the galley's commander.

Helm
This was the boat's chief way of steering and was controlled by a single helmsman.

Storage
Food, water and other supplies were stowed here for the galley's crew.

Oarsmen
In order to row rhythmically, slaves would either chant or row to the beat of a drum.

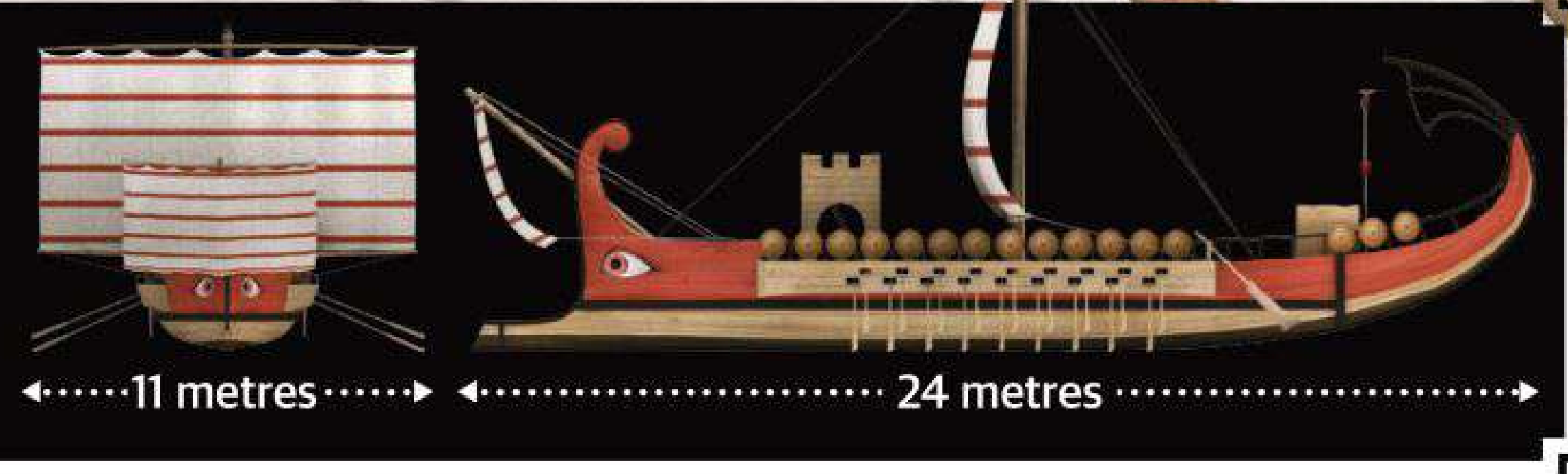
Ballast
With no keels, rocks gave the galley greater stability, but again made them heavier and so more vulnerable.

Oars
Each oar was approximately four metres long and attached to a fixed vertical peg via a leather loop.

FACT SHEET: BIREME

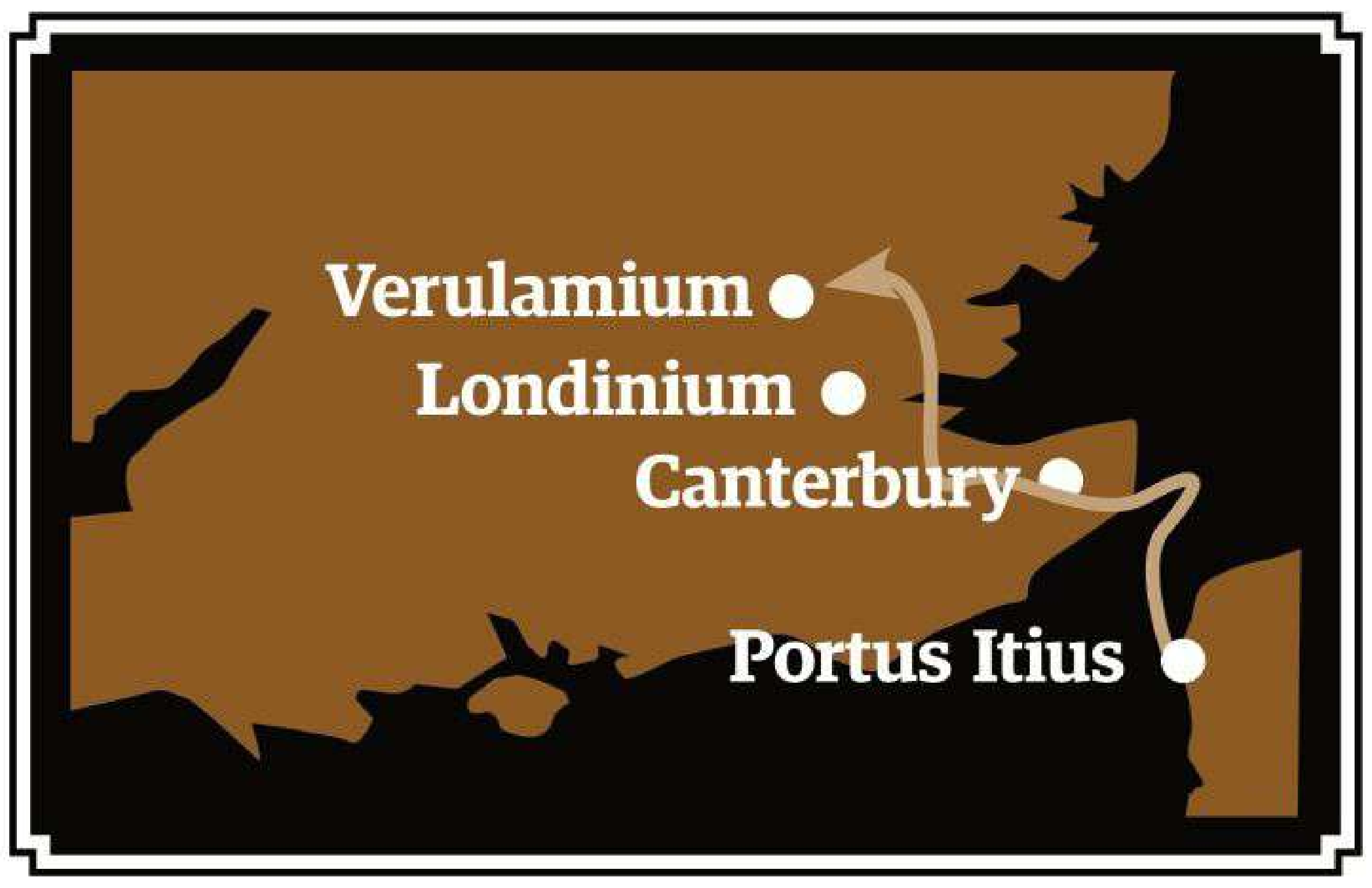
Biremes such as this one were named for the two decks of oars on either side

Crew Up to 130, including oarsmen, sailors and marines.



THE SECOND INVASION

Caesar's first trip to Britain had been costly, but he now knew that he wanted to conquer the land, for Rome and himself



Over the winter of 55-54 BCE, Caesar brooded over his expedition to Britain. Sure, it had done his celebrity status no harm - in fact, in Rome news of his exploits had sparked a 20-day party - but he was not a man who was used to failure. He resolved to return, and this time to conquer.

He ordered the construction of a new invasion force with the galleys built to a different specification. "Made a little shallower than those that are habitually used in the Mediterranean," as explained in his campaign diary, "to enable them to be hauled up on shore." He also put together a far bigger army. When he landed near Deal on 7 July 54 BCE, his flotilla of 800 ships disgorged more than 25,000 legionaries, 2,000 cavalry and a huge baggage train to supply them. The force was so great that the Britons onshore made no attempt to confront them, instead retreating to higher ground.

Caesar chased them all the way to the Stour River, 12 miles from the coast, and at dawn the following day his troops made their first contact with them. After a brief skirmish near present-day Canterbury, the Britons fled to a nearby hill fort, which the Romans now attacked.

The fort was ringed by a defensive ditch, which the legionaries overcame using the 'tortoise' formation. By creating an all-encompassing shield wall, they could work in relative safety, building a ramp across the ditch. The fort's walls were then breached and the stronghold taken.

It's widely believed that Vikings wore horned helmets, but this is a myth. Some Ancient Britons, however, did, like this one from the 1st century BCE

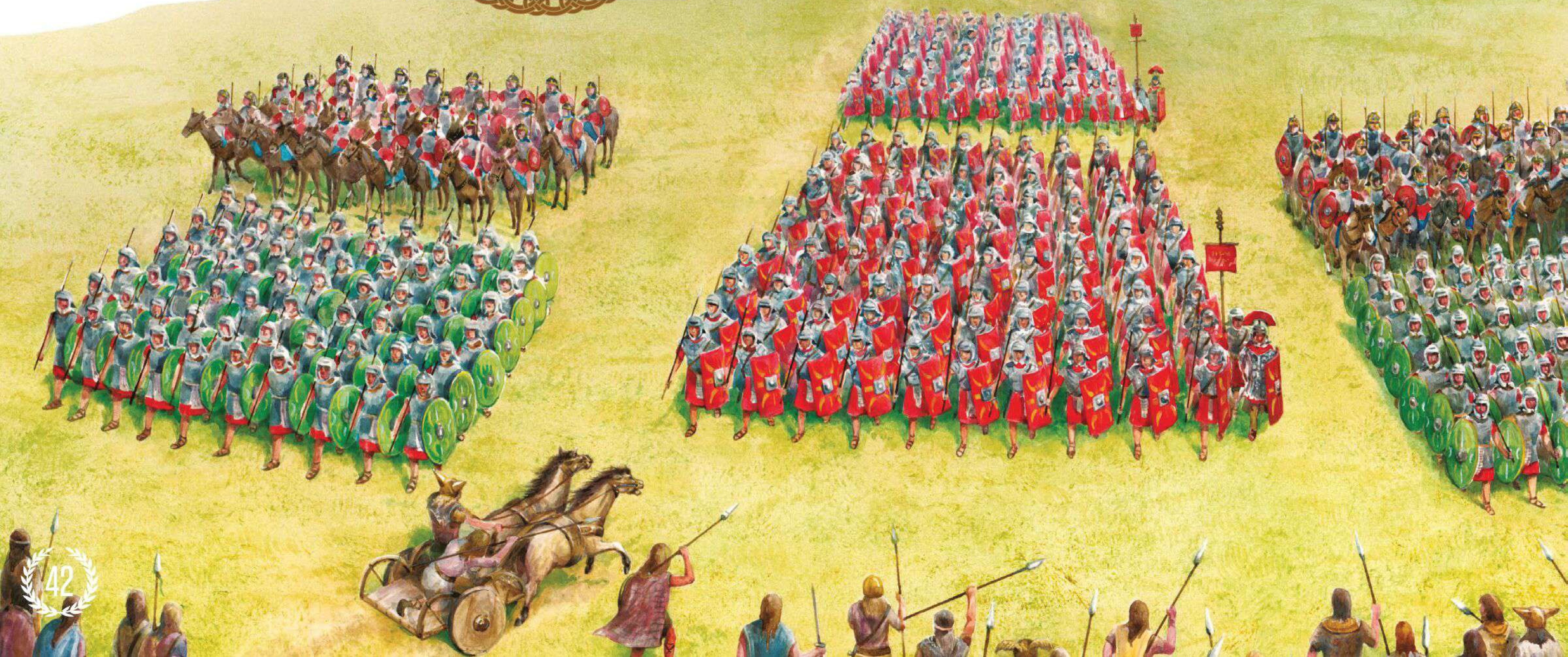
Before Caesar could capitalise on this rapid progress, he'd again end up cursing the British weather. Another freak summer storm clattered its way through the English Channel, and when the main body of his troops returned, they found most of their ships damaged, with 40 having been destroyed completely.

Caesar ordered the remaining boats to be brought ashore. A huge fort was then constructed around them so that they could be repaired in safety. It was a massive undertaking, but it took Caesar's men just ten days to complete. In that time, the British tribes did something they'd never done before - they united against a common enemy. They chose as their leader Cassivellaunus, who ruled the Catuvellauni tribe north of the Thames. Having recently defeated the Trinovante tribe, Cassivellaunus was the best the Britons had. His army met Caesar's head-on at the Stour River.

Here, the Romans witnessed first-hand one of the British warriors' unique tactics. Using lightweight chariots pulled by two fast ponies, a driver would transport a soldier into battle at high speed. From the back of the chariot he would launch javelins into the Roman ranks, before dismounting to fight at close quarters with a sword or spear. If he then tired or found himself becoming overwhelmed, he could return to the chariot and be sped away to safety. A modern army uses armoured personnel carriers in much the same way, and it was further proof to the Romans that these Britons were more than mere savages.

The battle was bitter, but as good as Cassivellaunus was, he was no match for Rome's greatest tactician or the world's finest war machine. His forces were eventually overwhelmed and forced to retreat. As he was chased back, he switched to guerrilla tactics, destroying food sources and laying traps. His army of resistance, however, was crumbling from the inside. As the bodies mounted, tribe after tribe joined the Romans, and by the time Caesar crossed the Thames, he knew the location of Cassivellaunus's secret stronghold.

As Caesar prepared to lay siege to Cassivellaunus' fort at Verulamium, near present-day St Albans, the British warlord decided to take one last gamble. He ordered an attack on the Romans' camp on the beach near Deal. It was an inspired but doomed move. When news of its failure reached Cassivellaunus, the canny warrior, by now out of options, offered up his surrender. Britannia, it seemed, was within Caesar's greedy grasp. The gods however, had other plans.



The 'testudo', or tortoise, formation was employed to great effect on the battlefield by the Romans, and demonstrates the ingenuity of their combat tactics

CAESAR'S NOTEBOOK

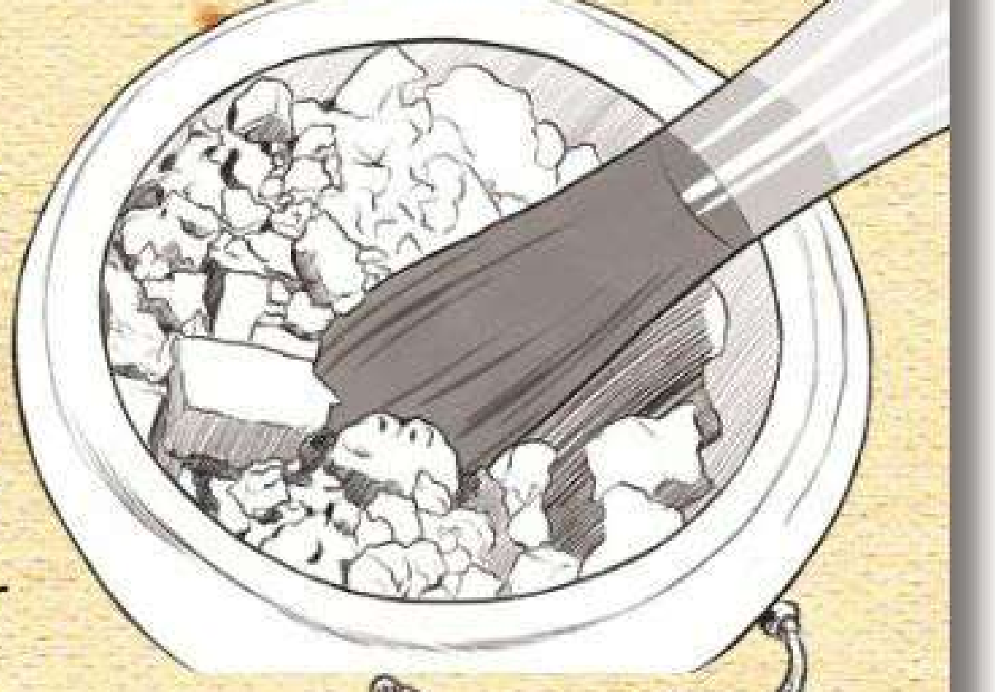
Caesar's book *The Gallic Wars* was written while he was literally making history. In it, he recorded, among other things, his impressions of British life

GEOGRAPHY

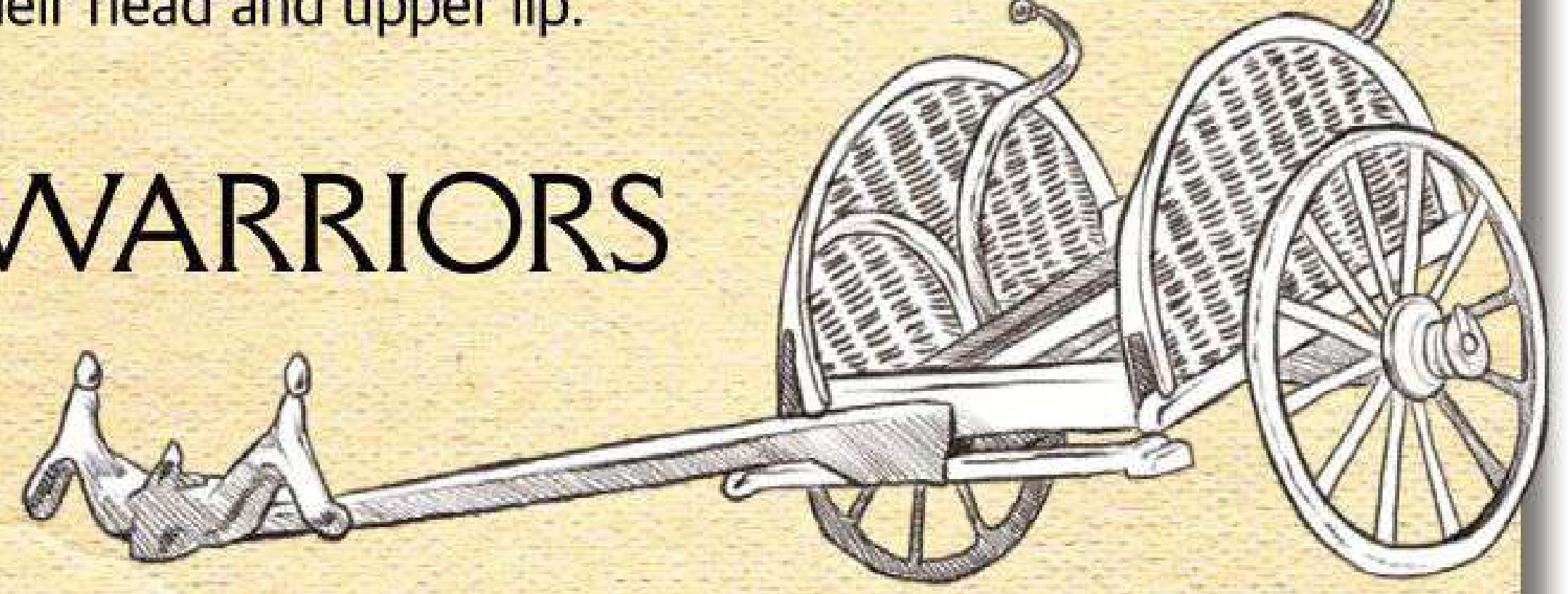
The island is triangular, and one of its sides is opposite to Gaul. This side extends 500 miles. Another side lies toward Spain and the west and is 700 miles. The third side is toward the north. This side is 800 miles in length. The island is about 2,000 miles in circumference.

PEOPLE

All Britons dye themselves a bluish colour, and thus have a more terrible appearance in fight. They wear their hair long, and have every part of their body shaved except for their head and upper lip.



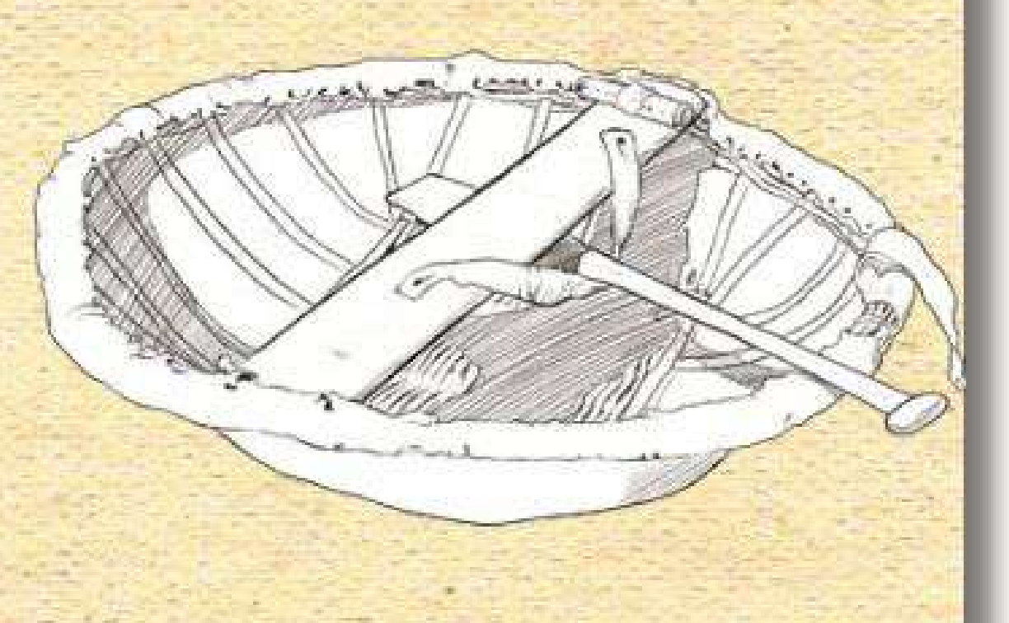
WARRIORS



Their mode of fighting with their chariots is this: firstly, they drive in all directions, throwing their weapons to break the ranks of the enemy, they then leap from their chariots and engage on foot. The charioteers in the meantime withdraw from battle so that if their masters are overpowered, they may have a ready retreat.

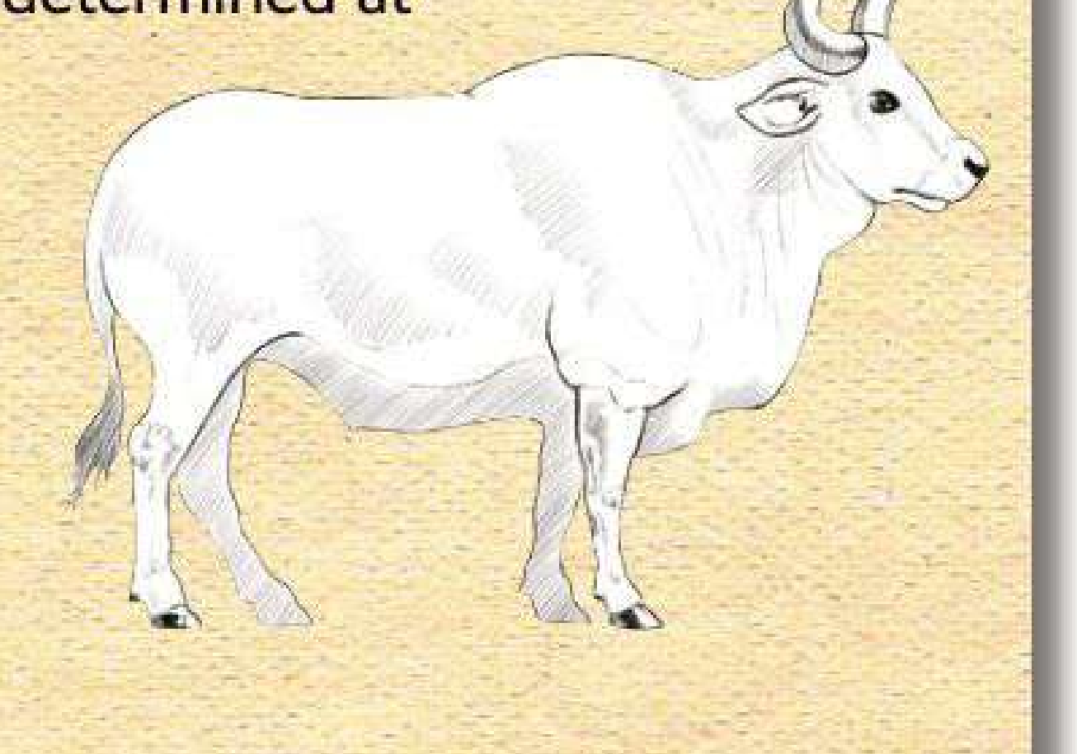
TECHNOLOGY

They have boats, the keels and ribs of which are made of light timber, then, the rest of the hull of the ships is wrought with wicker work, and covered over with hides.



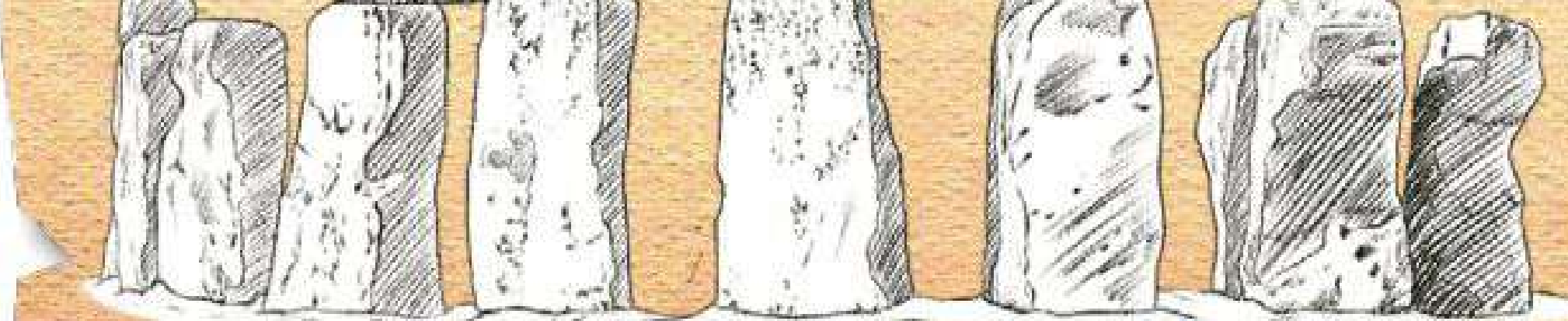
RESOURCES

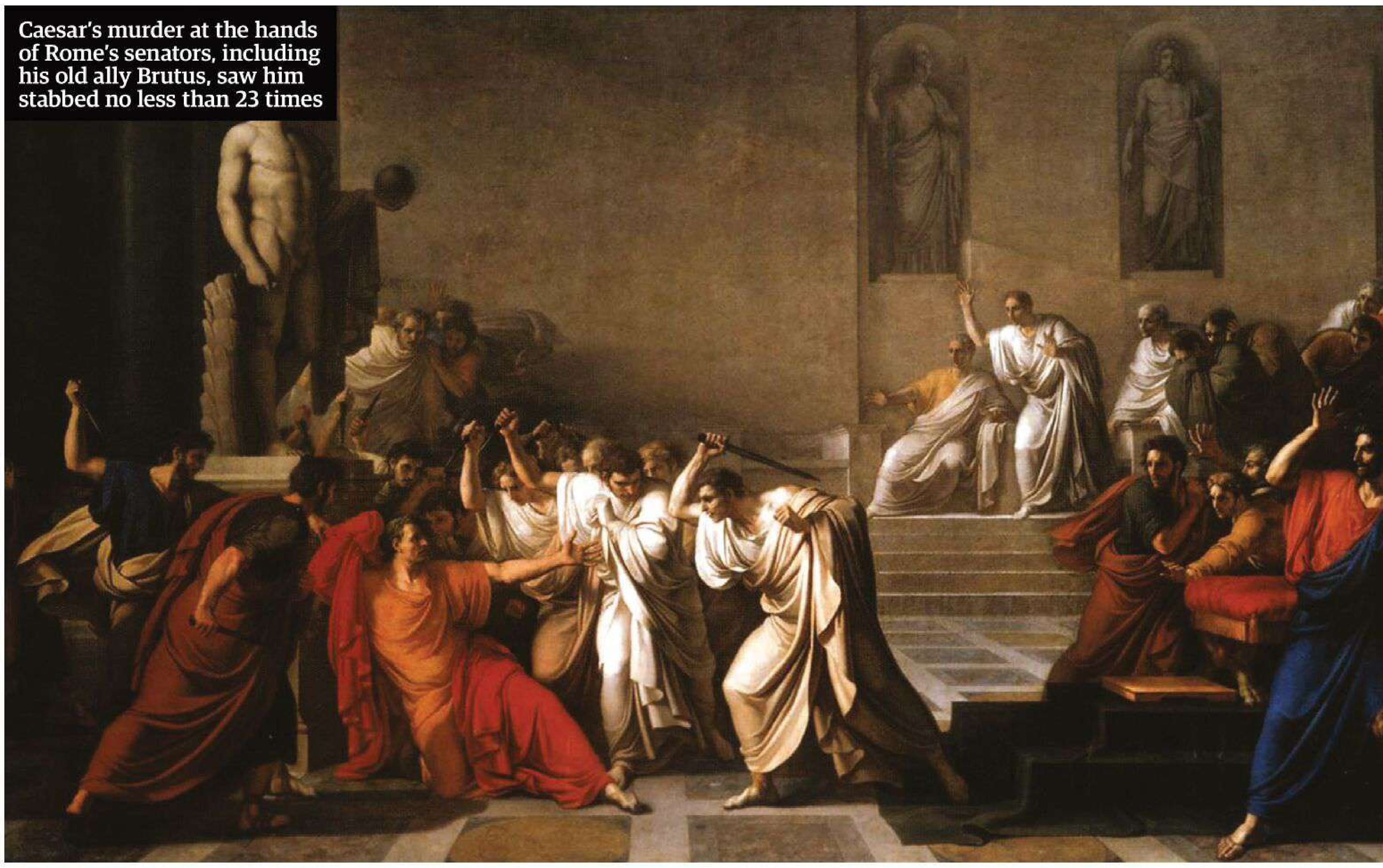
The number of cattle is great. They use either brass or iron rings, determined at a certain weight, as their money. Tin is produced in the midland regions; in the maritime, iron; but the quantity of it is small: they employ brass, which is imported.



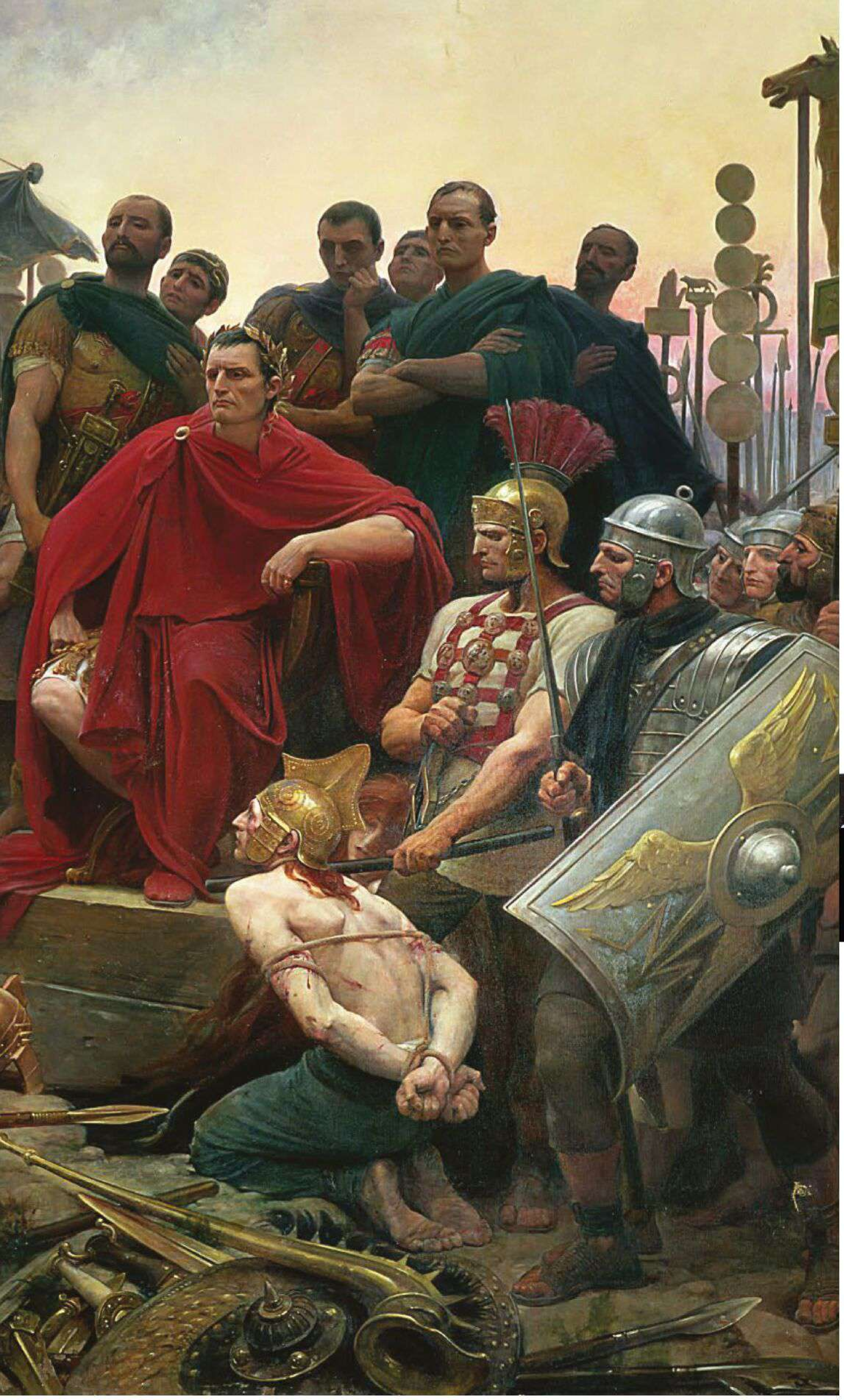
RELIGION

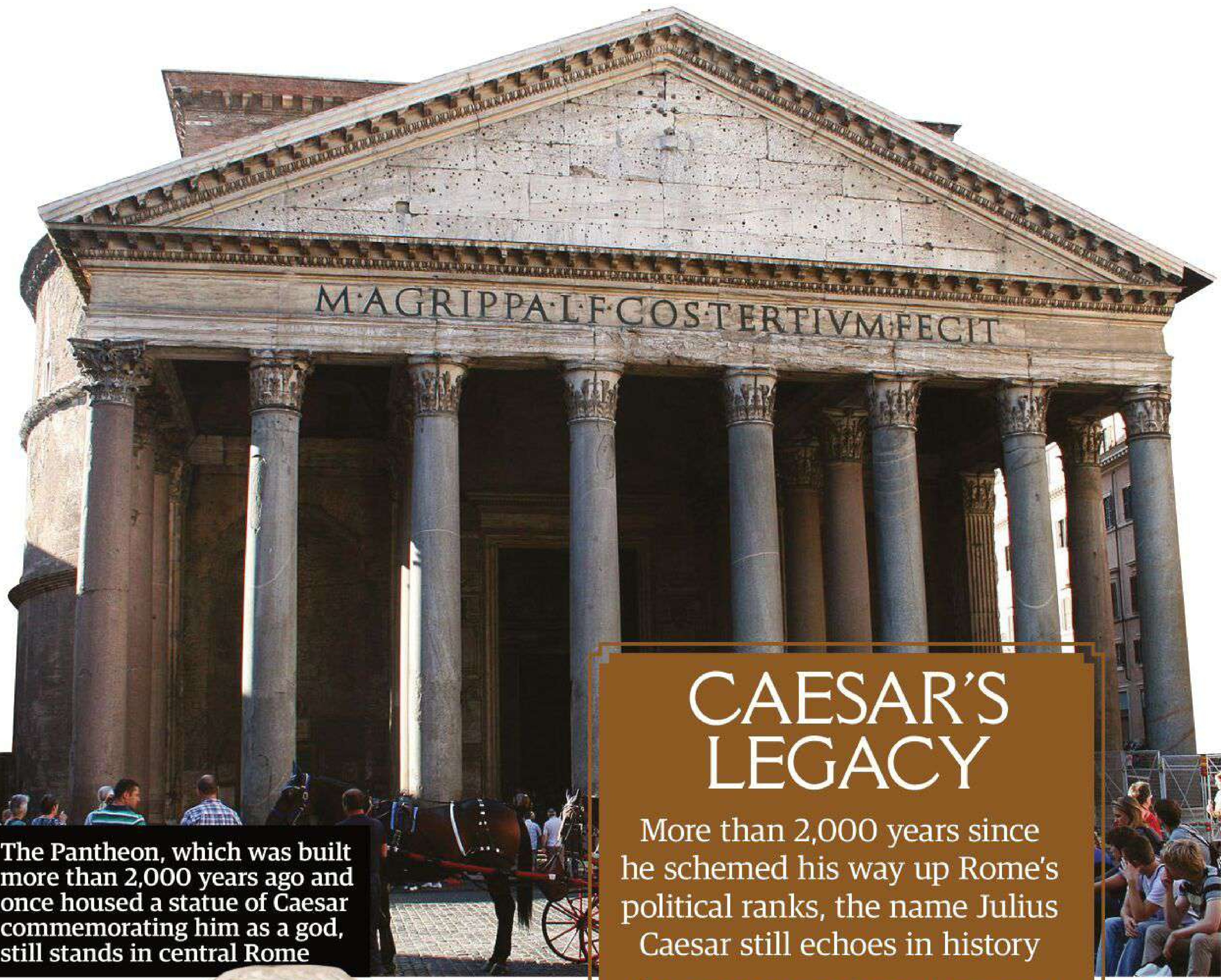
Druidism is thought to have originated in Britannia, and to have been thence introduced into Gaul, and even now those who wish to become more accurately acquainted with it, generally repair thither, for the sake of learning it.



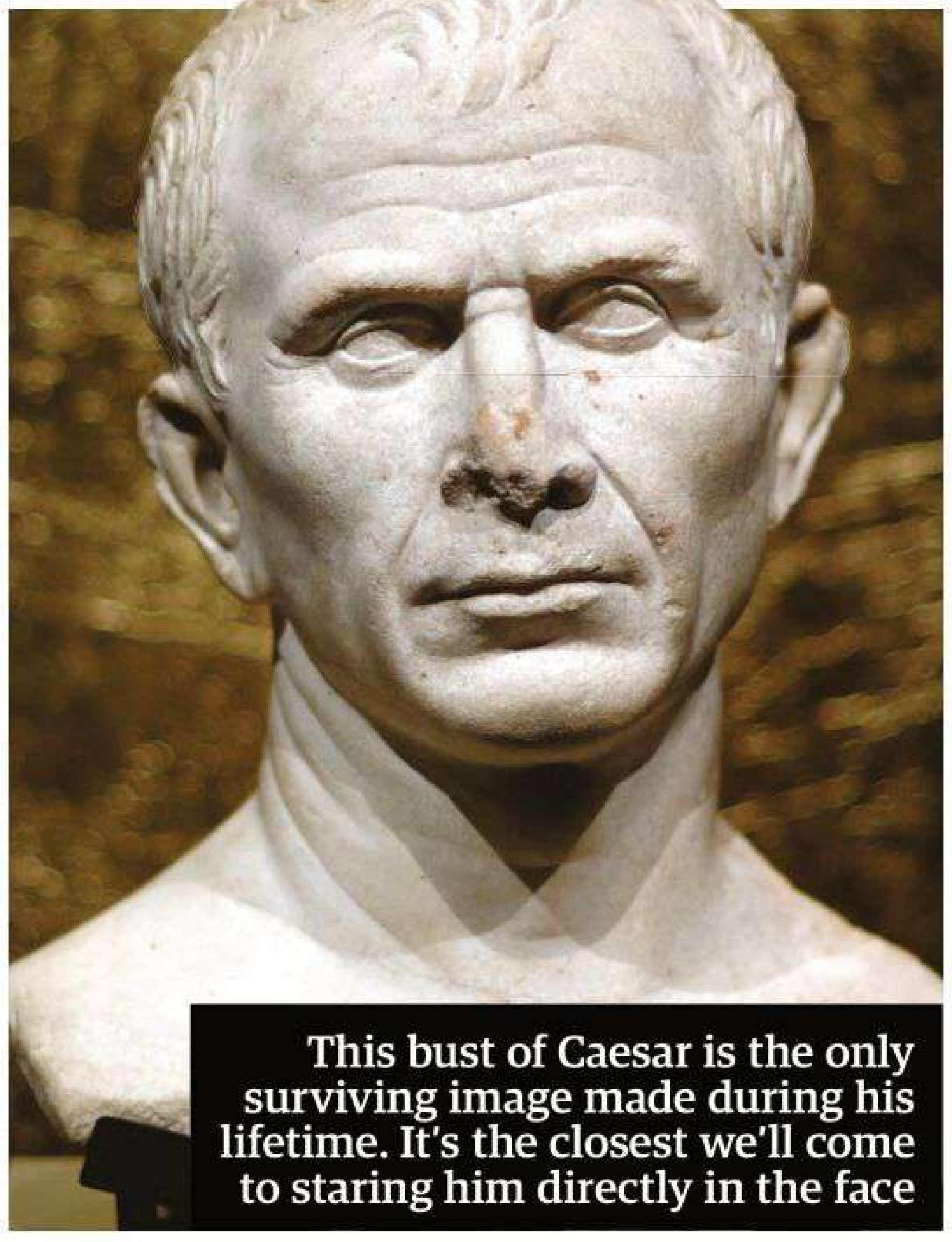


Caesar's murder at the hands of Rome's senators, including his old ally Brutus, saw him stabbed no less than 23 times





The Pantheon, which was built more than 2,000 years ago and once housed a statue of Caesar commemorating him as a god, still stands in central Rome



This bust of Caesar is the only surviving image made during his lifetime. It's the closest we'll come to staring him directly in the face

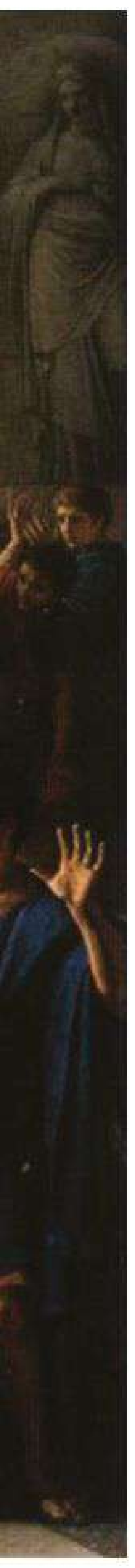
CAESAR'S LEGACY

More than 2,000 years since he schemed his way up Rome's political ranks, the name Julius Caesar still echoes in history

After Caesar returned to Gaul he waged war there for two more years, then returned to Rome, and conquered that too, after a bloody four-year civil war. Before he could crown himself emperor, however, he was assassinated by a gang of senators eager to free Rome from his tyrannical grip.

To the people of Rome, though, Caesar was no tyrant. They chased his murderers from the city sparking a further civil war. It ended with Caesar's adopted son Octavian being crowned emperor, ending Rome's status as a republic and ushering in an imperial era that would last for 400 years.

In life, Caesar may never have got to be the Romans' emperor, but in death they commemorated him as a deity, building a statue of him in the Pantheon, Rome's hall of the gods. History, though, remembers the man quite simply as one of the greatest who ever lived.



THE AFTERMATH

Caesar gained next to nothing from his invasions, but the system he left behind was to pave the way for Rome's return

While Caesar was still tangling with the British resistance leader Cassivellaunus, word reached him that there was trouble back across the Channel in Gaul. With their great conqueror out of the country, busy trying to add Britannia to Rome's wish list, the Gauls had seized the opportunity to rise up and rebel against their Roman overlords.

Caesar couldn't afford to keep his back turned much longer. He may have defeated Britannia's southern tribes, but that was no guarantee that those further west or to the north would accept Rome as their new ruler. Getting bogged down in what would inevitably have become a costly guerrilla war was not something Caesar could even consider. It was by now early September, and with the unmistakable smell of autumn in the air, Caesar began to make plans to return to the continent before the weather turned against him.

The peace terms he made with Cassivellaunus were hastily drawn up and remarkably generous. One of the first British tribal leaders to join Caesar had been Mandubracius. His father had been king of the Trinovante tribe that Cassivellaunus had defeated, grabbing the Trinovantes' land in the process. Mandubracius was now installed as leader of the Trinovantes, his lands were returned and Cassivellaunus was given the equivalent of a Classical-era restraining order. Caesar also demanded that the defeated Britons hand over hostages to be taken as slaves, and for a fixed tribute from the southern tribes to be paid to Rome annually. And that was it. Caesar jumped back on his boat and was never seen in Britain again.

His legacy, though, was to last forever. In his wake he left behind a series of client kings throughout southern and eastern England. These 'kings on strings', including Cassivellaunus and Mandubracius, and the lands that they ruled over, from Norfolk, Essex and Kent to Sussex, Hampshire and Berkshire, were all supposedly 'allied' to Rome.

The likely reality is that the annual tribute promised by these British tribes was never paid, and neither could they be described as part of the Roman Empire, despite the claims of Roman propagandists. Back in Rome, people soon realised that Britain was not going to yield the profits they had hoped for; there was no silver, nor any hope of booty except for slaves. Yet the expeditions brought Caesar huge and highly favourable public attention, with citizens across the land telling tales of chariots and barbarians who painted their bodies blue with woad. As far as they were concerned, the landing was a triumph, even though the actual results were barely noticeable.

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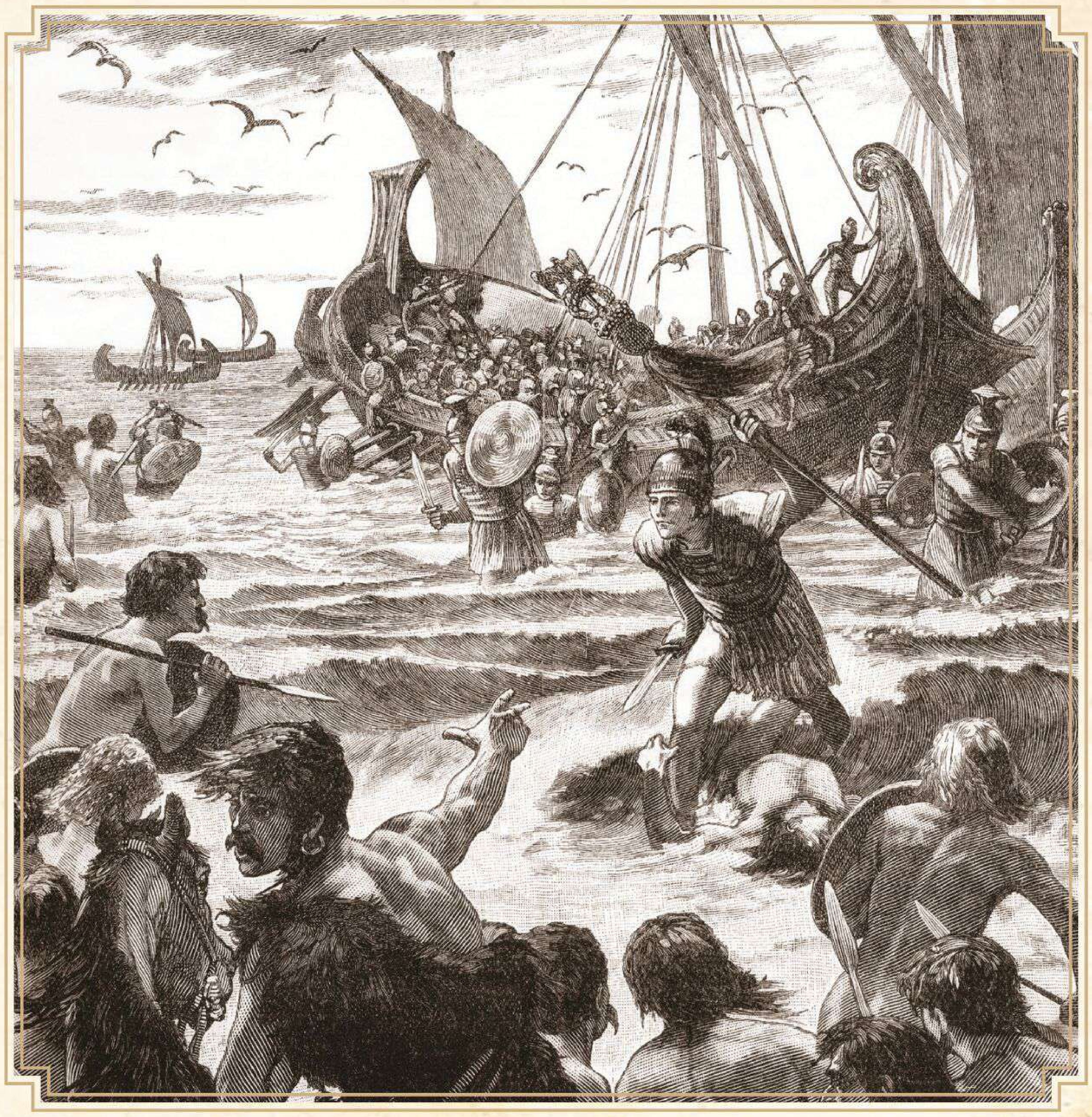


THE INVASION

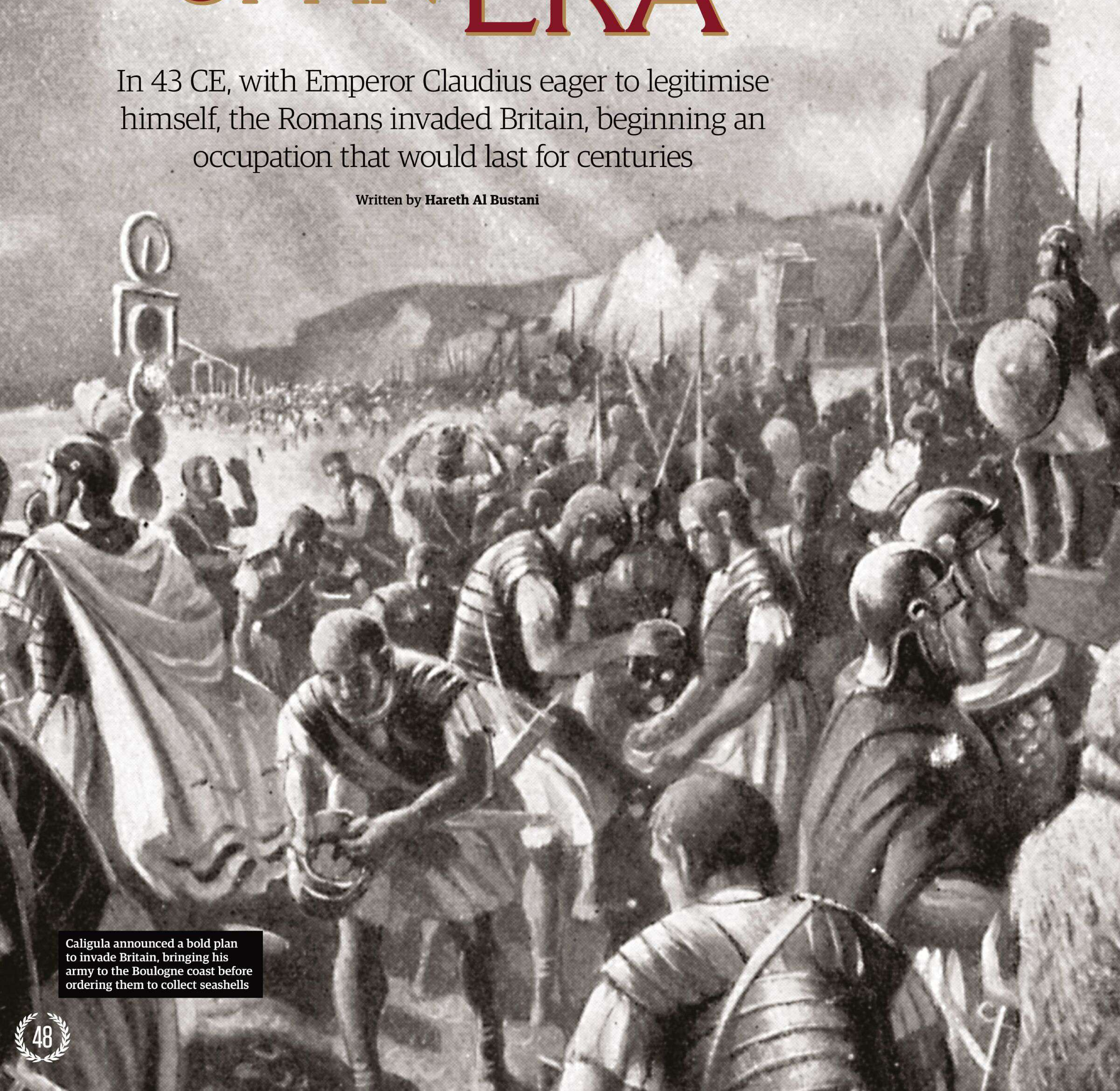
Crossing the English Channel was one thing,
but conquering the Britons was quite another -
find out how the Romans did it

48 THE START OF AN ERA
54 BOUDICA VS ROME
62 BRITAIN AGAINST ROME

THE START OF AN ERA

In 43 CE, with Emperor Claudius eager to legitimise himself, the Romans invaded Britain, beginning an occupation that would last for centuries

Written by **Hareth Al Bustani**



Caligula announced a bold plan to invade Britain, bringing his army to the Boulogne coast before ordering them to collect seashells

The Start of an Era

Before the time of Caesar, the Romans considered Britain an insignificant island of barbarians, stagnant at the edge of the world. Much of the country was untamed wildland, with only a few pockets rendered fruitful by great effort. It was known as a land of petty kings ruling fractured realms sitting precariously side by side. The southern straits of Dover had seen an influx of Belgic Gauls, first looting, then settling. Now they dominated the southeastern coast, boasting the island's most advanced civilisation.

By 54 BCE, despite having twice invaded Britain, learning much of the land and its people, Caesar returned with little to show for it. With even the mighty Caesar unable to subjugate the island, no sovereign attempted it again for quite some time. Augustus had thrice sought to invade but had more pressing matters to attend to, and though Caligula had stationed troops along the English Channel, his intent was rendered moot by his ineptitude, the emperor famously stationing his men on the opposite side of the Channel before ordering them to collect seashells.

Enter Claudius. Once the butt of the Roman court's jokes, the accidental emperor was thrust into power in 41 CE by the praetorian guard after they murdered his nephew Caligula. Though he was made emperor by default, he sought to do the empire justice. But first he would have to win over his detractors, who were long amused by his limp, speech impediment and lack of military glory. In the hitherto unconquered Britain, Claudius saw a chance to prove himself a true Roman, a martial prince worthy of the purple.

Thanks to Caesar's exploits, the island was now known to be rich in tin, iron, food and potential slaves. The timing could not be better. With the Rhine, Danube and Iberia secured, Claudius had four new legions to spare. Meanwhile, anti-Roman sentiment was sweeping across Britain, with pro-Roman leaders overthrown and exiled. Sensing it was time to project his might, Claudius amassed an invading force of 40,000, which like Caesar's set off from Boulogne at night for east Kent.

Once again an invasion of the island did not start out well. Upon receiving their commands, the army, led by senator Aulus Plautius, flat out revolted, refusing to leave Gaul and risk their lives "outside the limits of the known world". Outraged and concerned, Claudius sent his chief secretary, Narcissus, on his behalf to quash the mutiny. However, the soldiers simply jeered him with derision. Fortunately, the mood would not last and the soldiers were eventually sufficiently roused, agreeing to set sail for Britain. In order to maximise his mobility, Plautius divided his fleet into three contingents. This had the additional benefit of confusing the Britons about where they might land. They eventually settled on Richborough, a crescent-shaped natural harbour behind the Isle of Thanet that was helpfully protected from the elements.

However, they need not have been so cautious – between Caligula's laughable 'invasion' years earlier and the recent mutiny, the Britons had not taken the threat seriously enough to prepare. At the time the island was split between a number of petty kingdoms, confederations and tribes begrudgingly existing in uneasy harmony. While King Epaticcus ruled in Silchester, Hampshire, to the west was the Durotriges, a Belgic tribe centred around Dorset. Elsewhere, the Belgic Regni ruled in Sussex, while the Iceni held East Anglia. Further afield, there were numerous tribes, such as the Dobunni, Coritani, Brigantes and Dumnonii, all of whom enjoyed varying levels of independence.

Undoubtedly, the most powerful kingdom was located in the southeast: Camulodunum. However, despite its firm grip over what is today Essex, mighty King Cunobelinus had recently died and his realm had been precariously split between two of his anti-Roman sons, Togodumnus and Caratacus, who were too busy plotting against each other to pay any mind to the Romans.

The invasion caught Camulodunum off guard, and rather than risk it all in open combat they made for the woods, opting for a campaign of guerilla warfare and light skirmishes. Yet instead of joining forces and grasping the single chance they had of stemming the Roman advance they chose to go out on their own. Just as Claudius hoped to earn a name for himself, both brothers deemed the arrival of an invasion force as their big chance to stake their claim - everything was on the line.

Though the pair avoided the Romans for some time, Caratacus, the more gifted of the two, was able to reach Kent first, giving him a chance to pick his battlefield and the best defensible position on it. Despite his thorough preparations the Romans made short work of his men, quickly routing them. In pursuit, Plautius encountered the army of Togodumnus and utterly annihilated it. Instead of taking hostages, as Caesar had previously done, Plautius simply left behind forts in all his conquered territories, along with small contingents, and moved on - a hallmark of Tiberius' campaigns in the north.

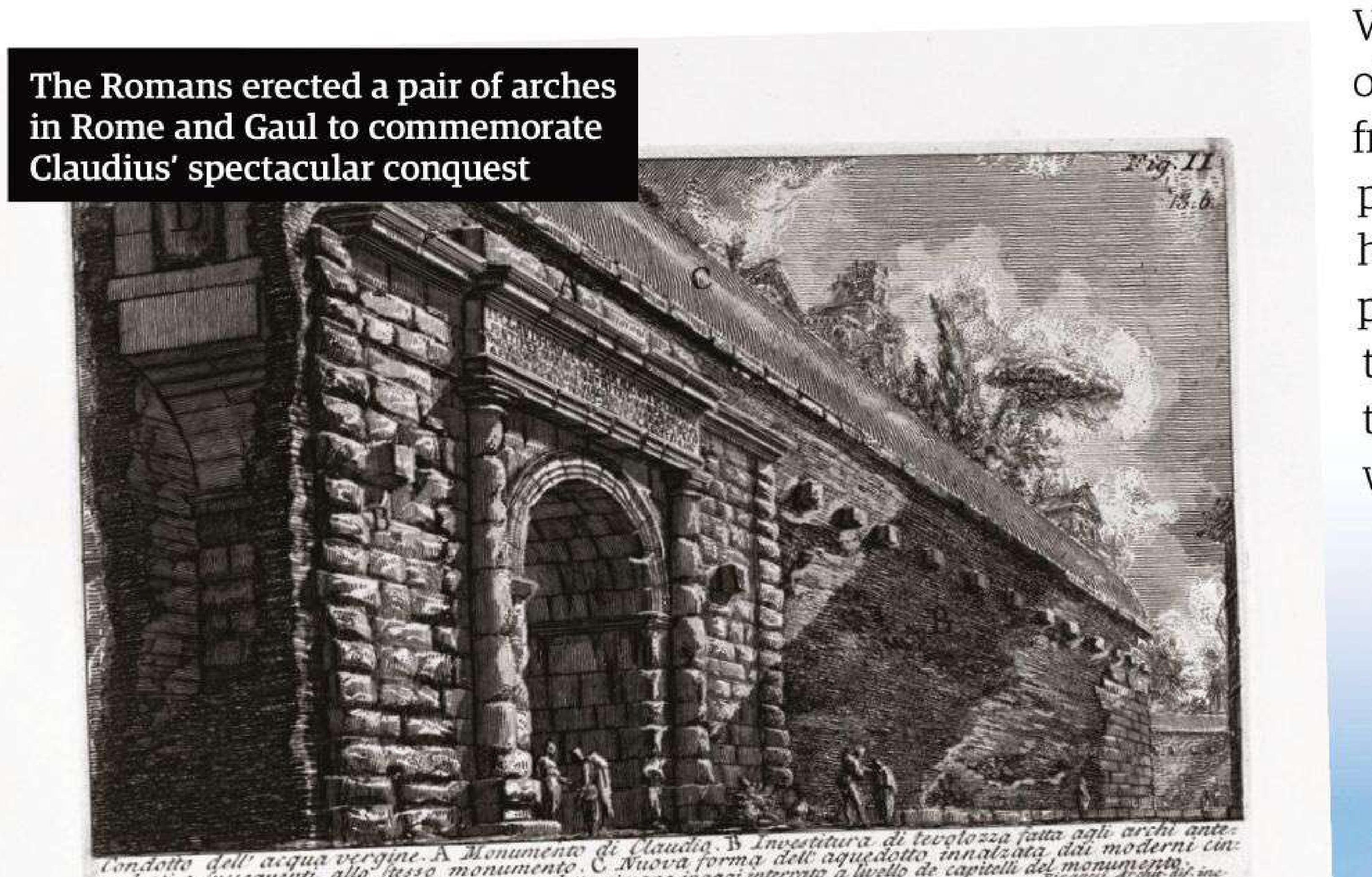
To the Britons it soon became clear that their only hope of holding back the Romans would be together. Now, rather than engaging in petty squabbling over their boundaries, they faced a megalithic power that threatened to consume them all. The armies of northwest Kent and beyond the Thames positioned themselves in the wooded hills along the River Medway. They bolstered their armies with the survivors from the ranks of Caratacus and Togodumnus. To limit the Romans' options they destroyed the bridge at Rochester.

Plautius' veteran German cavalry from the Rhine was undeterred. Used to crossing turbulent waters, they had no trouble fording the now unguarded river. Sneaking around the Britons' charioteers, they lobbed javelins and missiles at their horses, rendering them immobile. Simultaneously, future emperor Vespasian led the second legion upstream to a ford, crossed over and attacked from the right. Despite their best efforts, the Romans were repelled. The next day, however, having experienced the landscape and had a night to strategise, Plautius routed the Britons towards Dartford. It was a decisive victory - the combined might of the defenders had drawn a line in the sand and been roundly defeated.

The remaining Britons were chased across the Thames towards Camulodunum (Colchester), but when the Romans caught up they turned and faced them again in the marshes of Lea Valley - initially catching them off guard. Despite some losses, from here Plautius faced a simple path to Camulodunum. However, he was under strict orders: at the peak of his campaign he was to feign desperation and invite the support of Claudius, who would swoop in, barge across the Thames and claim glory for himself. Now that time had come, and having exceeded expectations, he was forced to exaggerate his loss of cavalry in the swamps, seemingly begging Claudius for aid.

The Romans landed and built a fortress at Richborough in Kent, a natural harbour protected from the elements

When Claudius arrived he did so promptly and with great pomp. He was followed by an entourage of praetorians, heavy artillery and scores of elephants. It was an army unlike any the Britons had ever seen; if they had not sensed the gulf of power that lay between them and Rome, here it was, plodding across their land. Claudius marched straight for Camulodunum, seizing the town and outlining his plans for a peaceful occupation of the island. With Togodumnus dead and Caratacus hiding in exile, their kingdom would become a Roman province, with Camulodunum the capital and Plautius the governor. Since Camulodunum was little more than a barbarian town, the Romans would build a city atop a hill to the southeast - the residence of the propraetor and seat of Roman government. The


The Romans erected a pair of arches in Rome and Gaul to commemorate Claudius' spectacular conquest
Fig. II
Condotto dell' acqua vergine. A Monumento di Claudio. B Investitura di tevolozza fatta agli archi ante-cedenti e sussequenti allo stesso monumento. C Nuova forma dell' aquedotto innalzata dai moderni cin-que palmi dallo speco antico D. Questo condotto rimane inoggi interrato a livello de capitelli del monumento.
Piranesi Archit. dis. inc.

Colchester Castle was built on the foundation of the Temple of Claudius, located at the heart of the first Roman capital of Britain

Claudius' invasion of Britain gave him the military gravitas needed to keep his detractors at bay and cement his legacy
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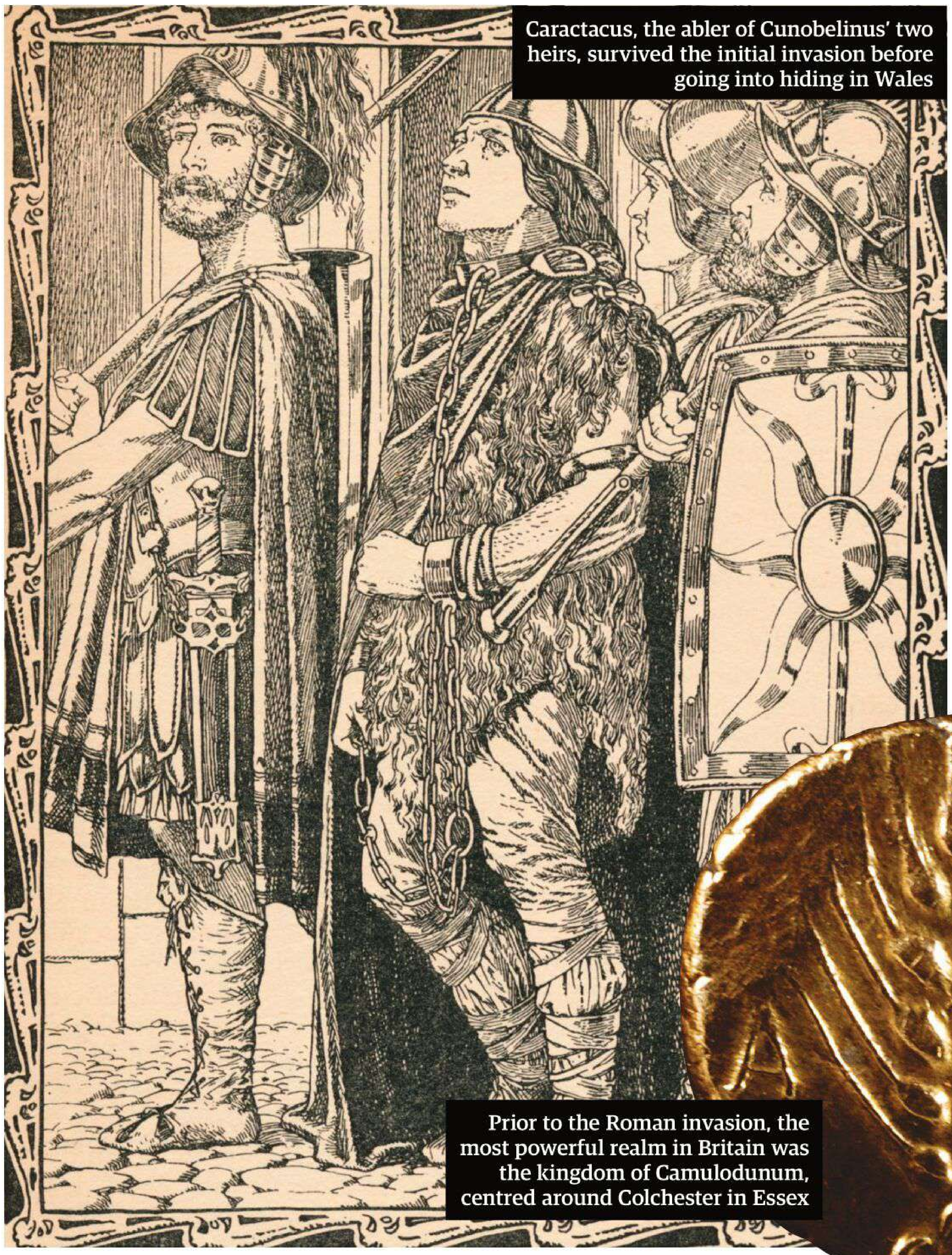
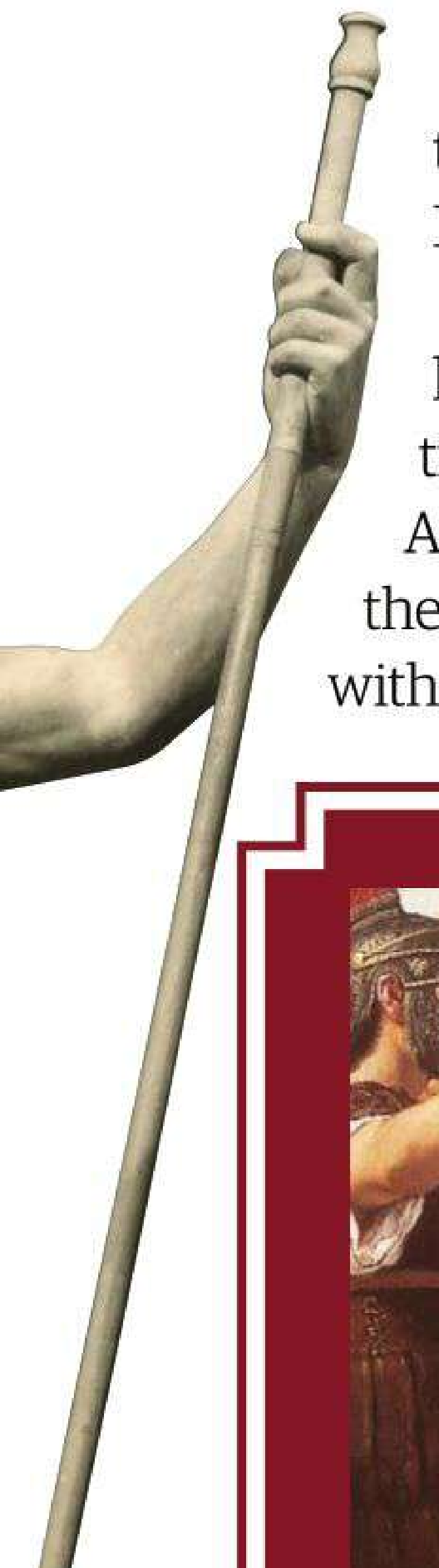


Caractacus, the abler of Cunobelinus' two heirs, survived the initial invasion before going into hiding in Wales

Prior to the Roman invasion, the most powerful realm in Britain was the kingdom of Camulodunum, centred around Colchester in Essex

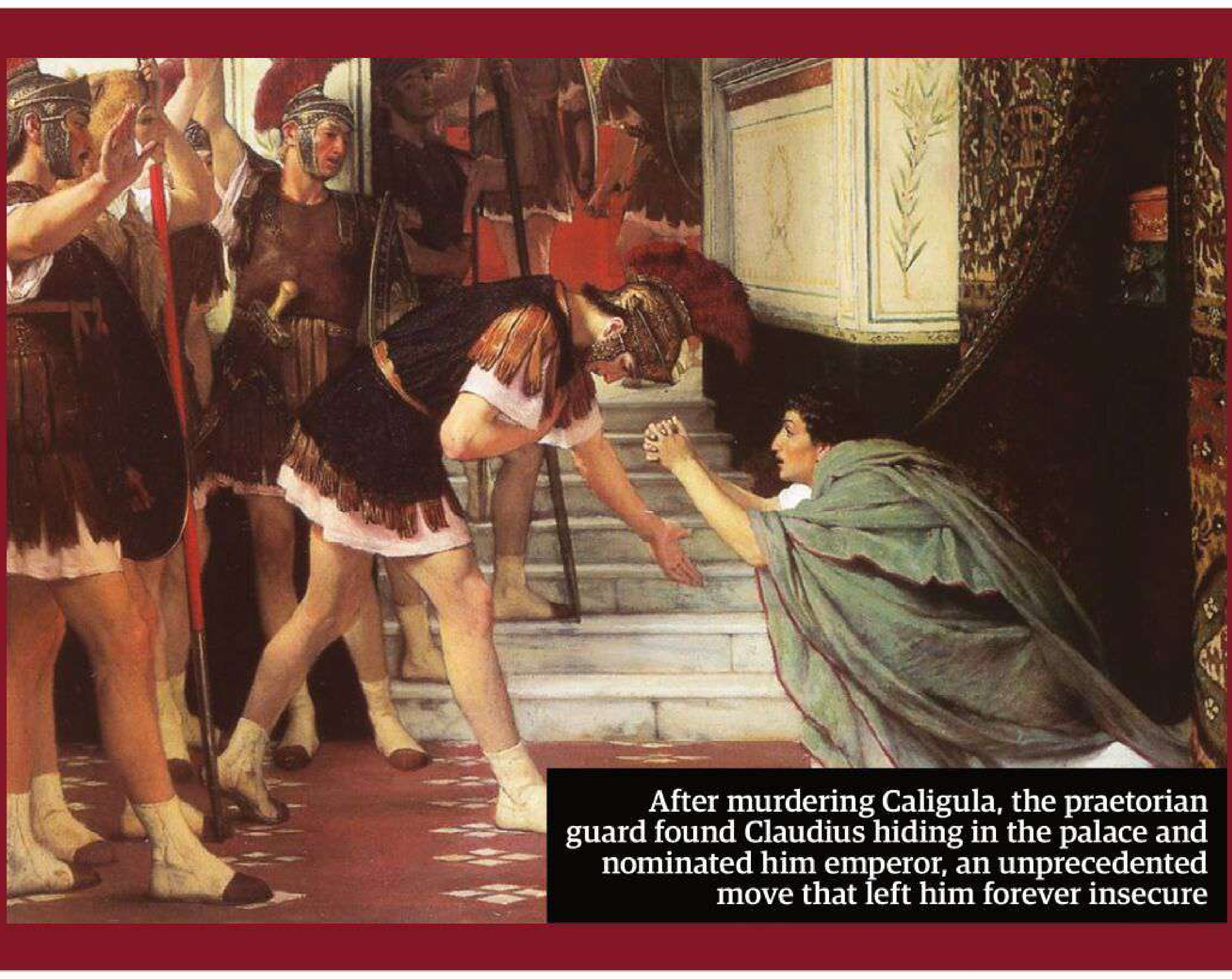


city centre would boast an epic temple erected for the worshipping of Claudius as a god.

Meanwhile, a self-governing city was built for the Belgic Britons in a valley called Verulamium in modern Hertfordshire. Having observed the Roman dominance from the sidelines, Cogidubnus, king of the Regni of West Sussex and ruling from Chichester, rapidly paid tribute to Claudius, who lavished him with more land. Furthermore, he was made a Roman citizen and nominated Rex Legatus Augusti in Britannia - King and Lieutenant of Augustus in Britain. Under his authority a temple was built to Neptune and Minerva, dedicated to the prosperity of the imperial family. Elsewhere, unwilling to fight the inevitable, Prasutagus, the king of the Iceni, also submitted to Rome, as did the Brigantes.

With a firm footing on the island, Claudius left for Rome, where he enjoyed a great triumph and was hailed as Britannicus. Arches were erected in Rome and Gaul and the conquest would henceforth be celebrated with a festival every year. While Dio claims the emperor scored a victory at the Thames, Suetonius says he never fought a single battle in Britain. Regardless, in just over two weeks, without spilling any blood himself, Claudius secured the capitulation of 11 kings. Even the king of the Orkney Islands, the other side of Caledonia, beyond Britain, swore fealty. Having secured southeast Britain, Plautius and his successor, Publius Ostorius Scapula, were left in charge of subjugating the rest of the island. However, first they would have to go through Caratacus, who was mustering resistance in the mountainous land of Wales even before the rise of the defiant warrior queen Boudica.

THE EMPEROR WHO WON



After murdering Caligula, the praetorian guard found Claudius hiding in the palace and nominated him emperor, an unprecedented move that left him forever insecure

The nephew of emperor Tiberius and the grandson of Augustus' sister with Mark Antony, Claudius was of good stock. However, within the imperial family he was considered unsuitable for public office. Instead, he threw himself into history, writing 20 books about the Etruscans and eight on the Carthaginians. His mother and grandmother had to stop him from covering the Second Triumvirate for fear of scandal. Though his self-depreciating demeanour helped him survive both the tyrannical Tiberius and the maniacal Caligula, when the latter was murdered Claudius found himself thrust into the purple.

For elevating, rather than killing, him, he gifted the praetorians 15,000 sesterces and an annual bonus of 100 sesterces thereafter. Having recalled many who had previously been exiled, after uncovering various plots against his life his paranoia drove him to execute many more. Like Caligula, he had no military experience, a shortcoming that fuelled his invasion of Britain. He brought numerous senators along to witness it to distract them from plotting in his absence.

Within the empire he held regular spectacles and was a prolific builder, constructing aqueducts and digging canals. He would later marry Agrippina, mother of Nero, and name her son heir over his own, Britannicus. He died in 55, most likely poisoned by Agrippina's hand.

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SUCCESS AT LAST

After two failed attempts, the Romans finally managed to invade Britain in 43 CE. Looking for a way to prove his worth and cement his place as emperor with his fractious Senate, Emperor Claudius saw it as a prestigious victory, and it was the beginning of almost 400 years of Roman rule. The Roman army fought its way up the island and for years the northernmost boundary of the empire was Hadrian's Wall, which sits in northern England today.

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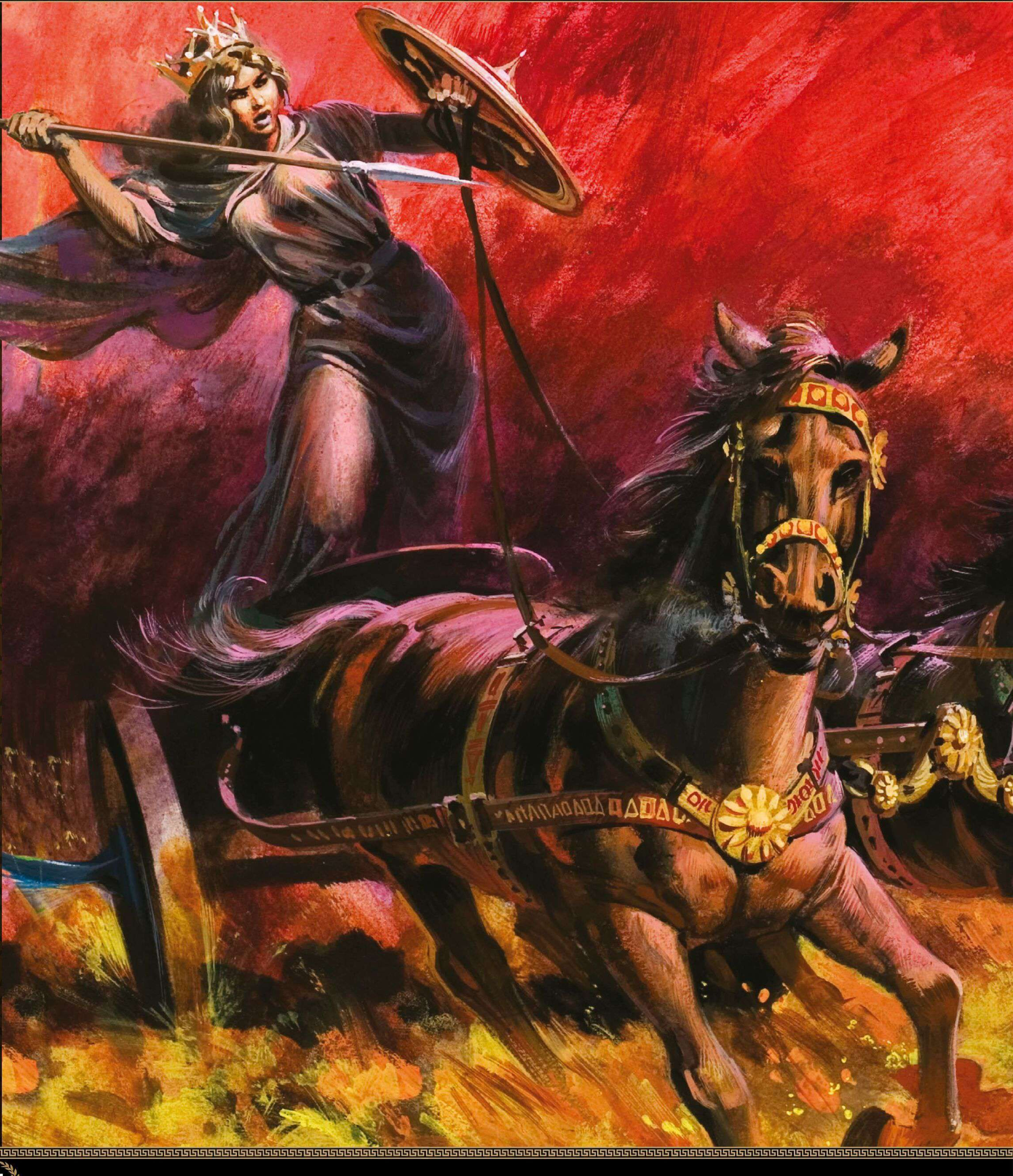


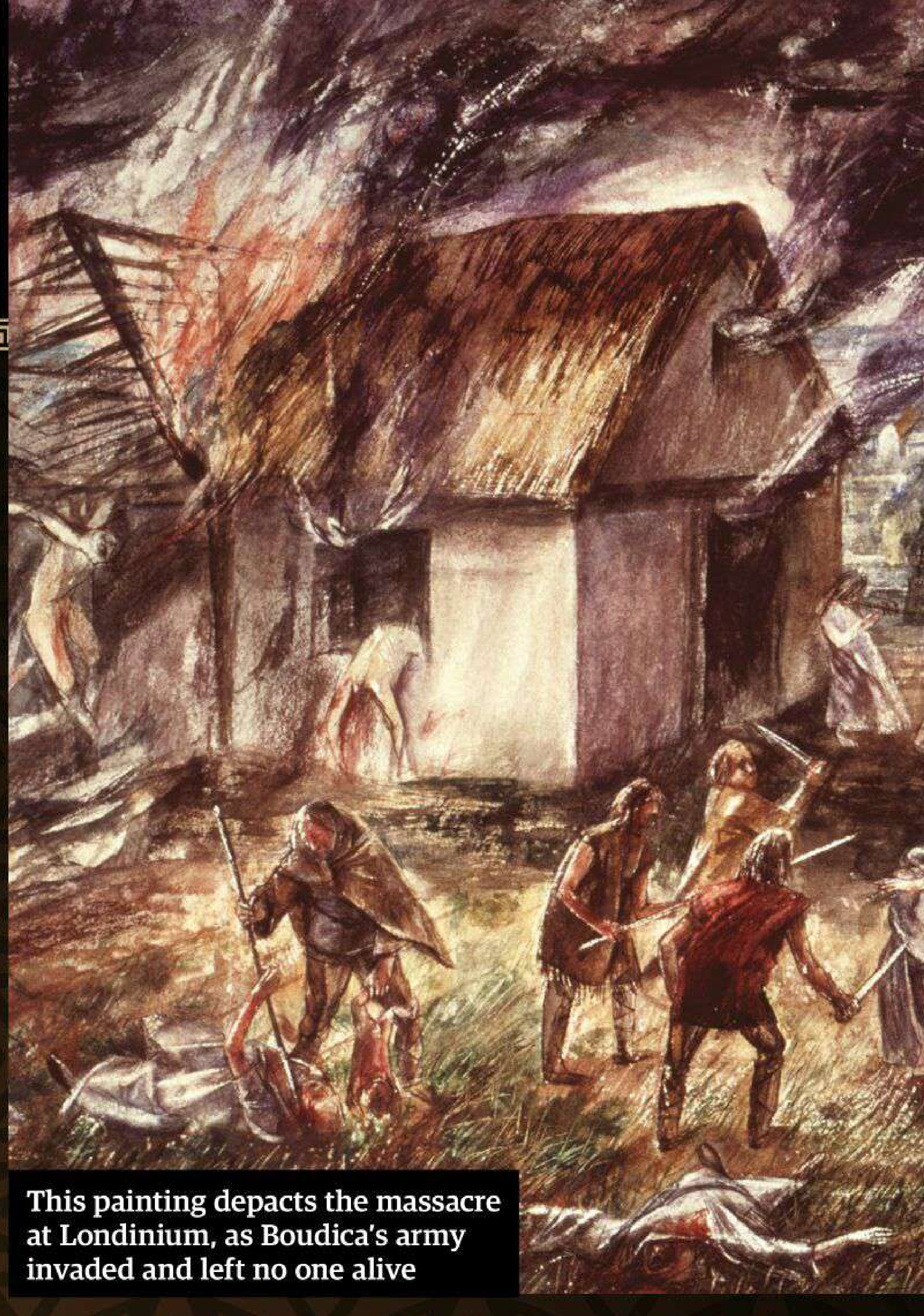
In the single-minded pursuit of vengeance, the warrior queen of the Iceni massacred thousands of Romans and almost caused the empire to abandon Britannia entirely

BOUDICA VS ROME

Written by **Erich B Anderson**

While Boudica of the Iceni was still mourning the death of her husband Prasutagus, a horde of Roman agents forced their way into her home. The armed men seized the Celtic queen, along with her two daughters, and dragged them all into public view. There, before the eyes of her people, Boudica was brutally flogged as if she were a slave and her two virgin daughters raped. When the violence was over, the Romans continued their acts of cruelty on the Iceni by confiscating the land of their chief nobles. Furious at their actions, the queen quickly gathered her people. She would stop at nothing until she had her revenge against the Roman Empire.

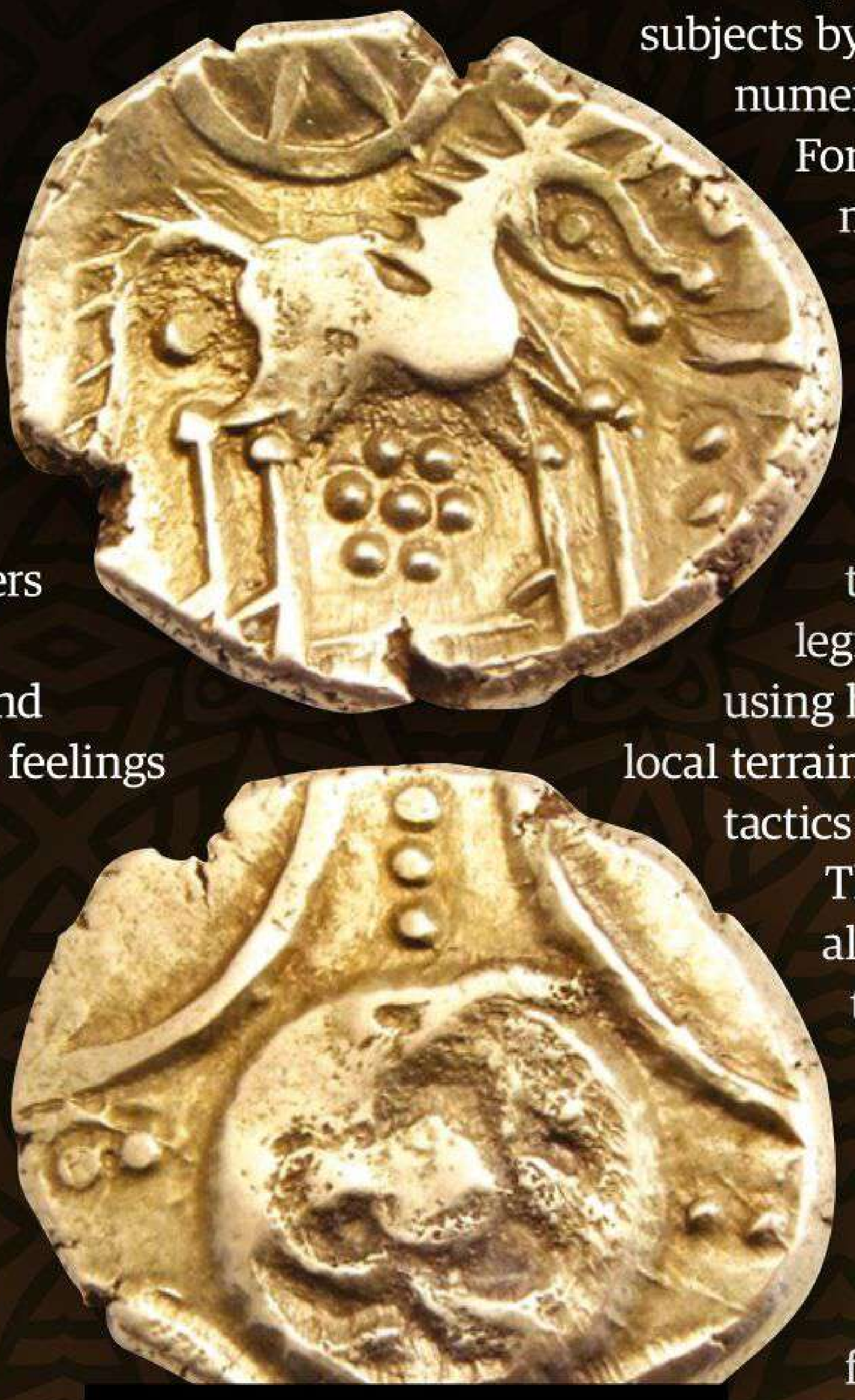
The Roman commanders gave the orders for these acts in 60 CE after they received the will of recently deceased King Prasutagus. To show his loyalty to Rome, the British ruler left half of his kingdom to the emperor, but bequeathed the other half to his daughters – an act of love that would backfire in ways he could never have imagined. According to Roman law, contracts with client kings terminated upon their death, and thus turn all of the possessions of the kingdom into Roman property. Usually, this transition from a native monarchy to Roman rule was carried out with far less brutality, in the hope of gaining the loyalty and allegiance of the newly conquered people.



This painting depacts the massacre at Londinium, as Boudica's army invaded and left no one alive

Yet the Romans were greatly insulted, not just because Prasutagus presumed to think he could leave such a large portion of his kingdom to his heirs – the shocking reaction to his will was mostly because these heirs were women. While powerful women were relatively common among the Britons, female rulers were an absurd concept in the patriarchal society of Rome. And the Romans would make their feelings about this very clear.

It did not take long for thousands of aggrieved Britons to hear of the uprising of the Iceni, as well as the atrocities committed on Boudica and her family. The Romans had only conquered Britannia less than 20 years before, during the reign of Emperor Claudius in 43 CE, and the oppressive treatment of their new subjects by imperial officials had created numerous rebels all over the island.



Iceni gold coins

For several years after the conquest, most insurgents became a part of the full-fledged guerrilla war led by Caratacus, king of the Catuvellauni. After the decisive victories of the Romans over his forces during the invasion, the king learned not to face the legions on the battlefield, instead using his superior knowledge of the local terrain to carry out successful guerrilla tactics on the foreign army.

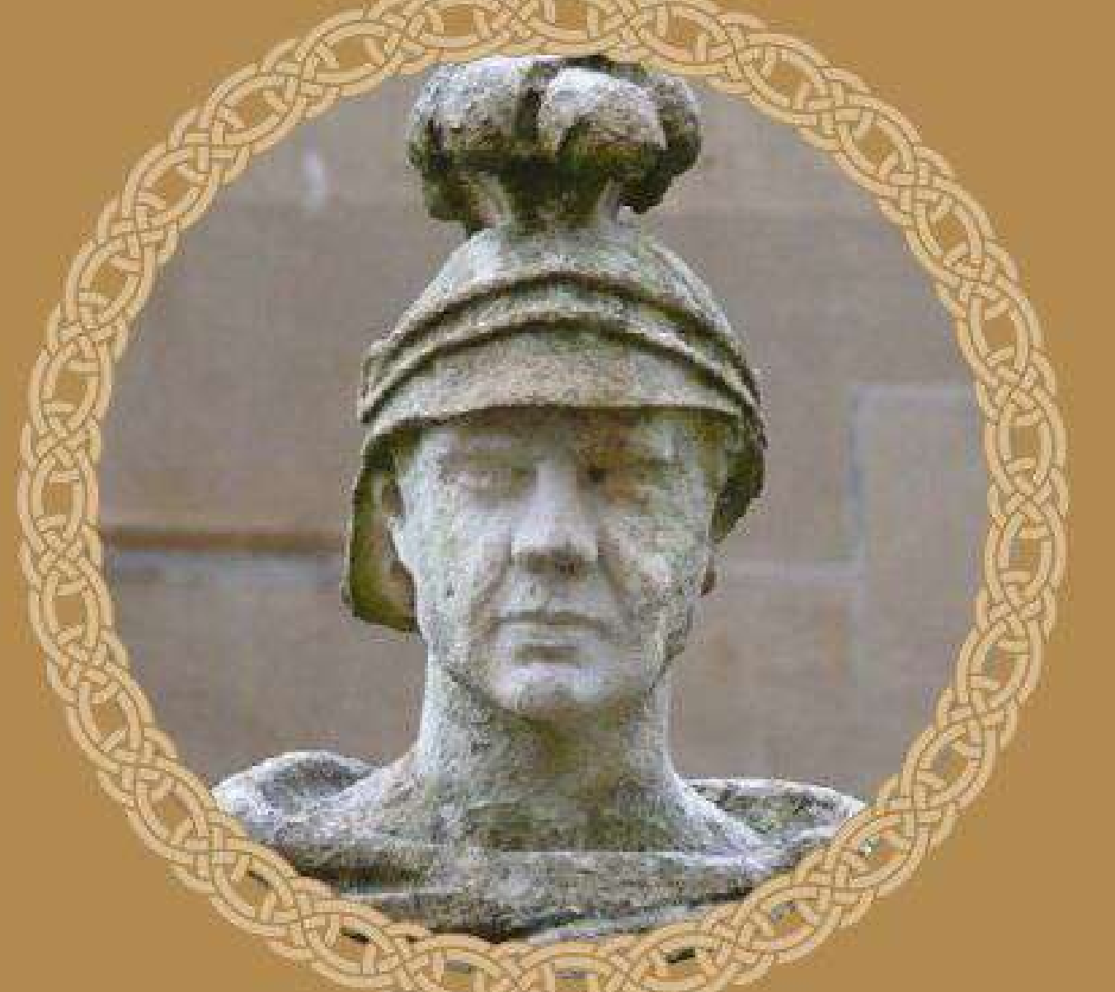
Though the Iceni officially became allies of the Roman Empire after the conquest, a faction of the tribe also participated in a minor revolt in 48 CE, when the governor Publius Ostorius Scapula enacted a draconian measure to discourage Britons from joining Caratacus. The governor had his men force their way into the homes of the Iceni and they confiscated all weapons. However, when the Iceni insurgents revolted with warriors from the neighbouring Catuvellauni and Coritani, they had no chance against the Roman army. Scapula quickly crushed the rebel forces when he stormed the Iceni hill fort they fought from and slaughtered all of the rebels.

The Iceni had more than enough cause to rally behind their queen, but the main reason Britons from other tribes flocked to swell her ranks was that they no longer had any major rebel army to join. In 51 CE, Scapula continued his campaign to quell the unrest throughout the island by targeting its source, Caratacus. And once the rebel king was forced to meet the Roman army in pitched battle, the governor defeated him. Caratacus then fled to the court of Cartimandua, queen of the Brigantes, to seek refuge. Yet instead of aiding a fellow British ruler, the queen betrayed her tribal rival to the Romans, gaining much trust from her overlords but losing the respect of many of her people. Among those who had fallen out of favour with her was Venutius, her husband.

After Cartimandua divorced him in 57 CE, he attempted to seize her kingdom from her but was thwarted by the Roman forces that came to the aid of their client queen. Although he would later become the next great rebel leader, Venutius would not make another move until more than a decade later and remained in hiding during the Boudican rebellion.

> "The Iceni and the Trinovantes were willing to risk everything"

THE ROMANS

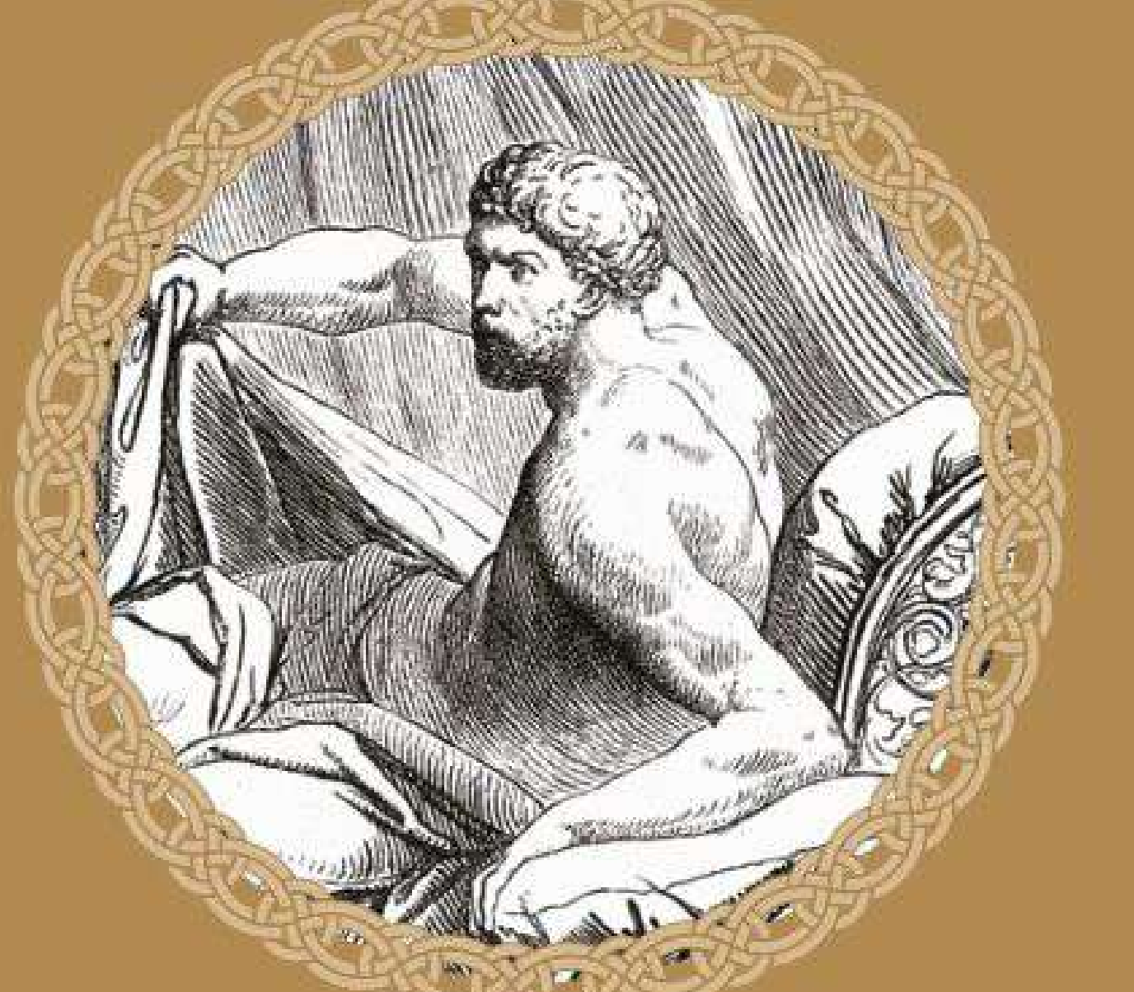


GAIUS SUETONIUS PAULINUS

When Paulinus became the governor of Britannia in 58 CE, he had already proven himself to be a very skilled general. In 40 CE, he was the first Roman to lead an army over the Atlas Mountains in North Africa.

GNAEUS JULIUS AGRICOLA

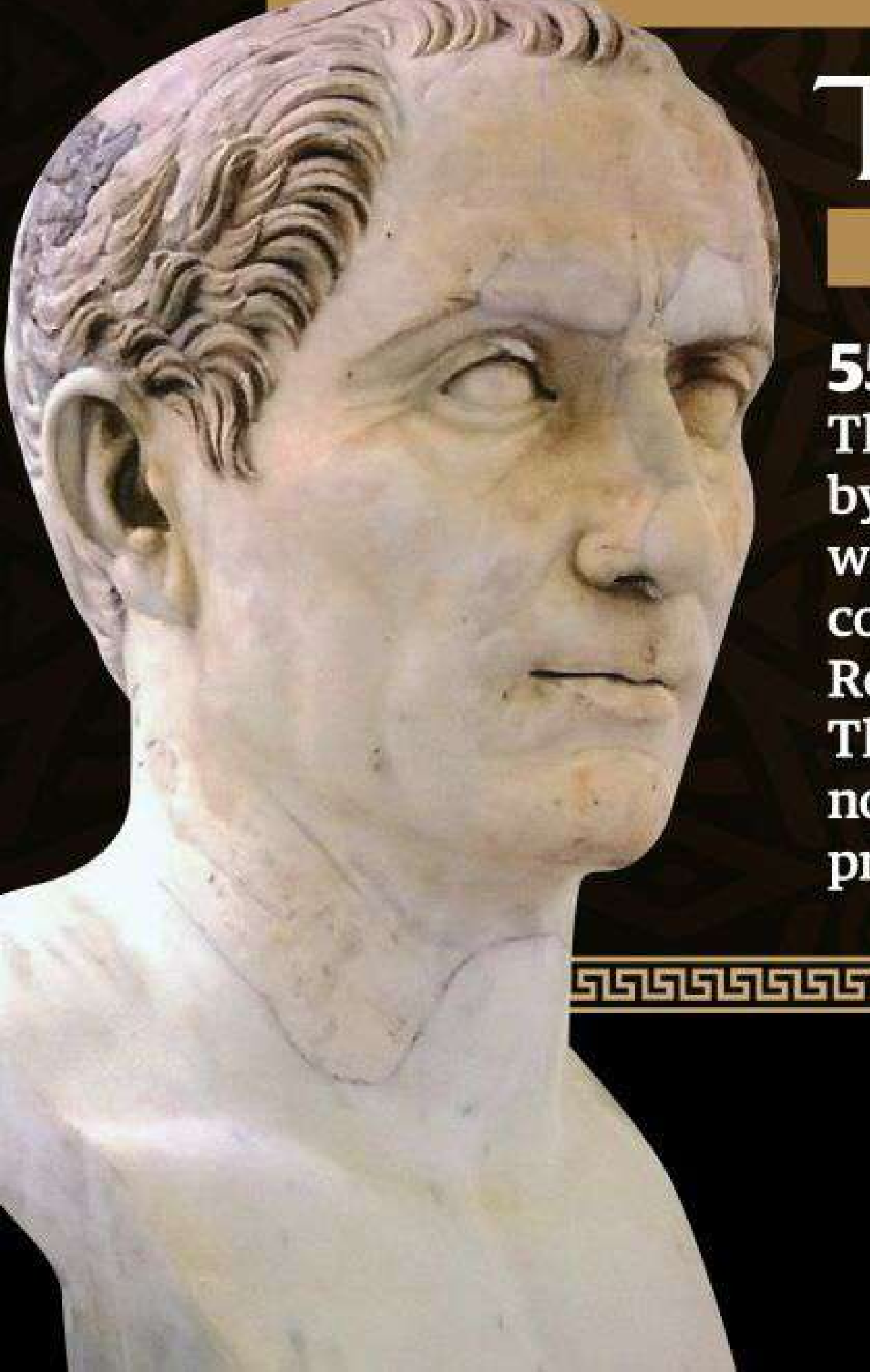
Agricola was only a military tribune under Paulinus during the Boudican revolt. However, his participation in the conflict was one of the major reasons that his son-in-law Tacitus recorded the event.



QUINTUS PETILLIUS CERIALIS

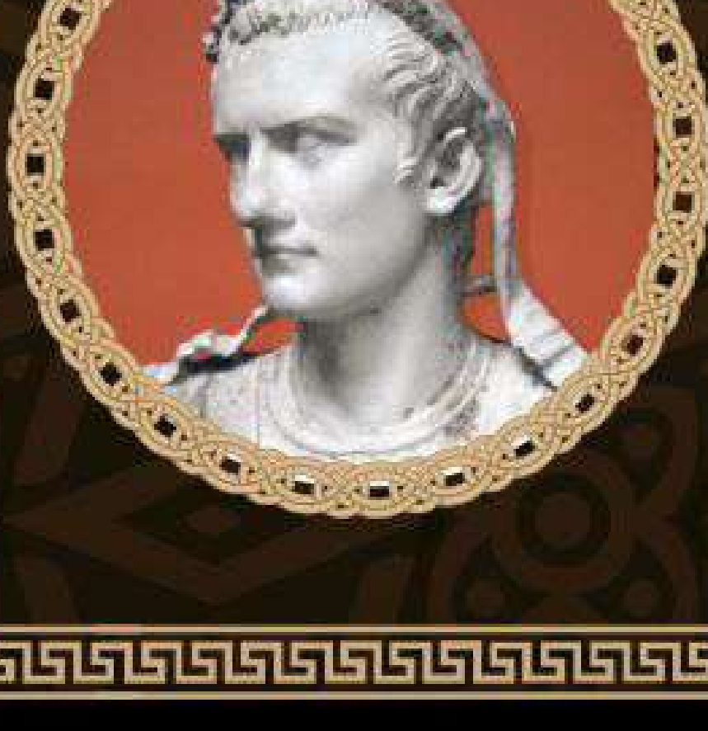
Cerialis was a young and impetuous commander when he first entered history as the legate of the ninth legion. Yet even after his disastrous failure against Boudica, he became governor of Britannia in 71 CE.

THE ROAD TO REBELLION



55-54 BCE
The invasions of Britannia by Gaius Julius Caesar were the first violent conflicts between the Romans and the Britons. Though successful, no permanent Roman presence was created.

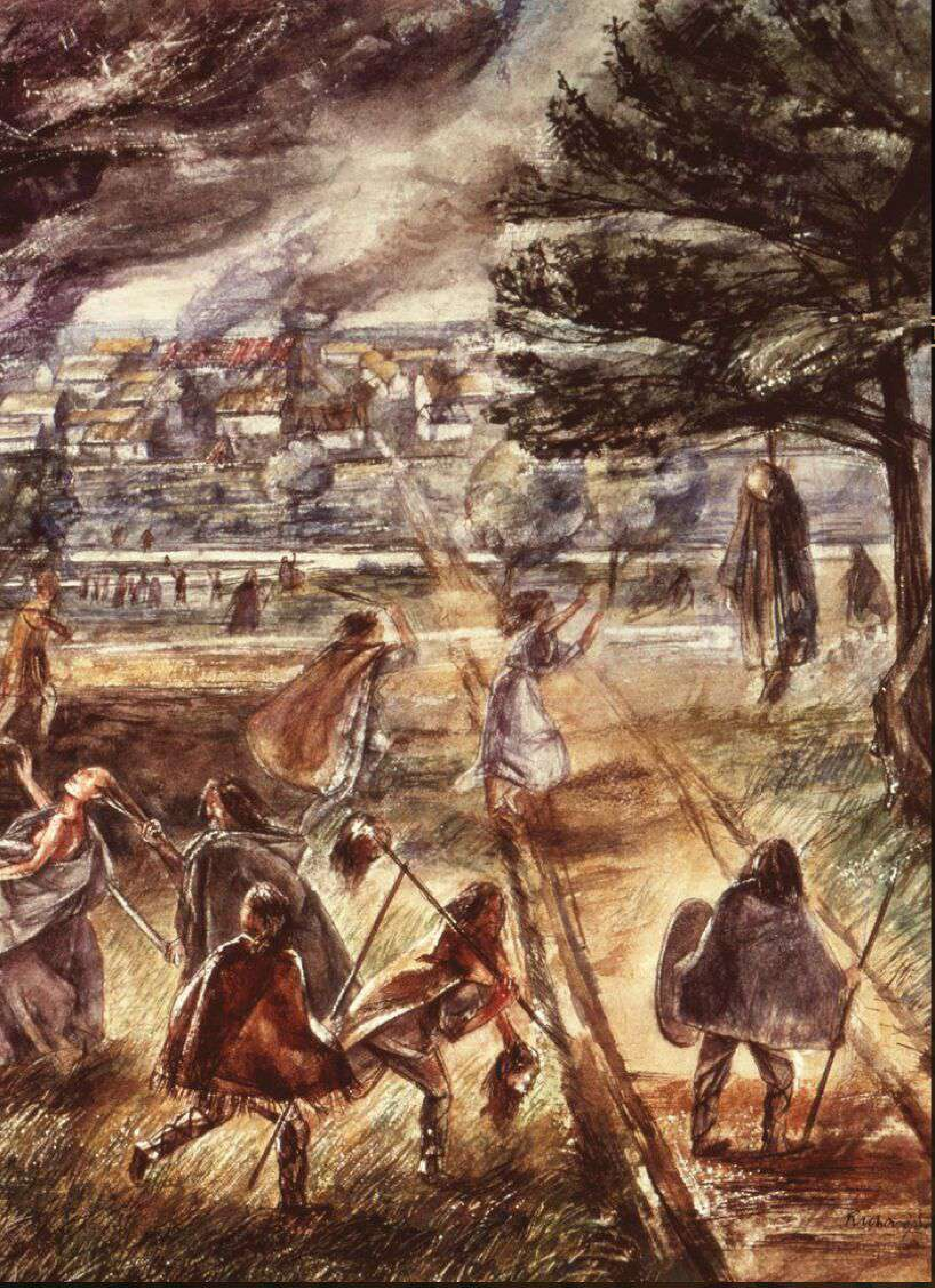
40 CE
The failed attempt of Caligula to invade Britannia. Instead of crossing the channel, the emperor ordered his soldiers to gather seashells and place them in their helmets.



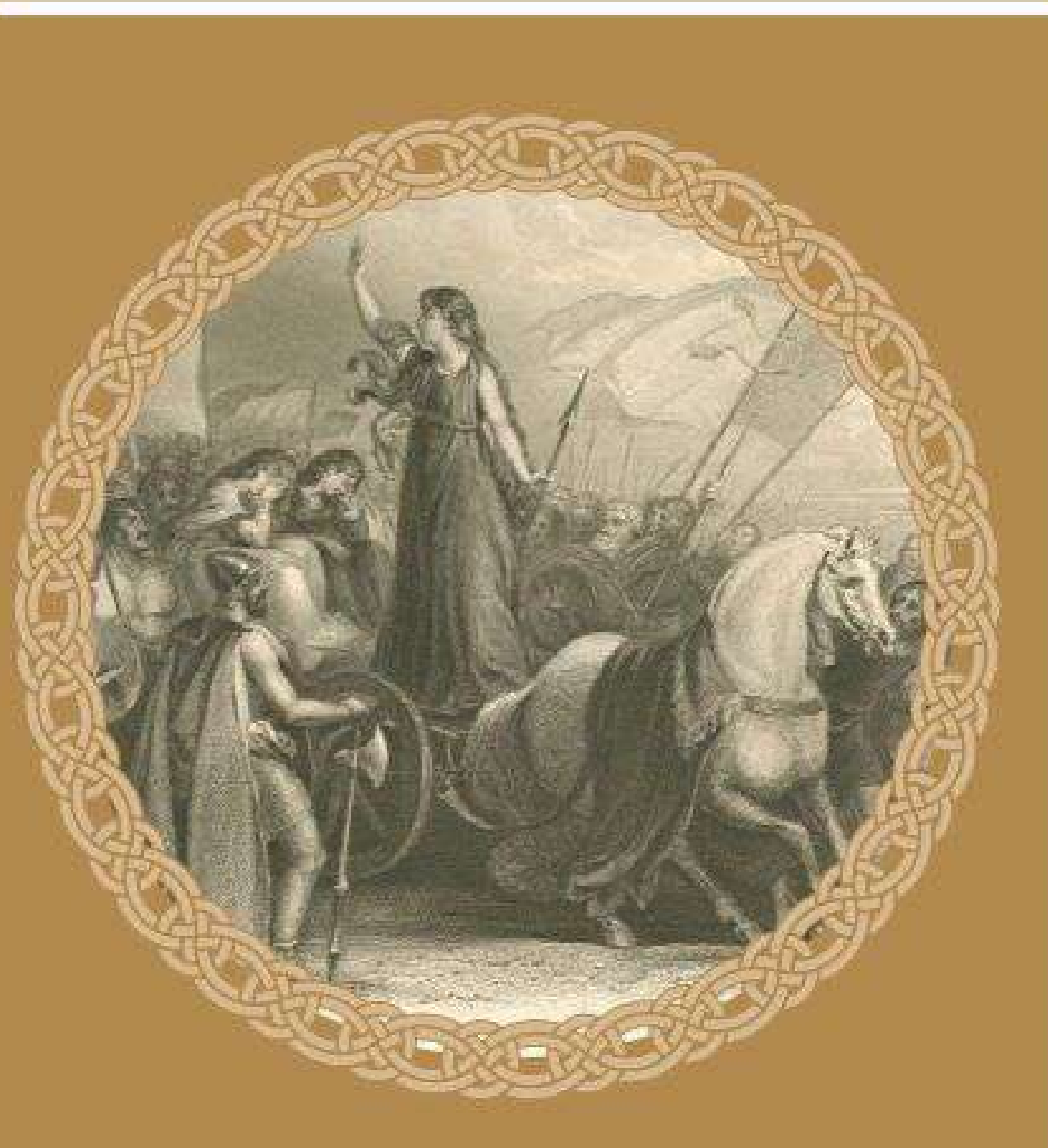
43 CE
The Roman conquest of Britannia. While Aulus Plautius was the chief military commander, he patiently waited for Emperor Claudius to join him in the end and claim the overall victory.

48 CE
Governor Publius Ostorius Scapula suppressed a revolt carried out by a faction of the Iceni, angered over the unwarranted search of their homes and seizure of their weapons.

50 CE
The colonia at Camulodunum was established over the former capital of the Trinovantes. Native nobles were appointed to oversee the construction of the temple of Claudius.



THE TRIBES

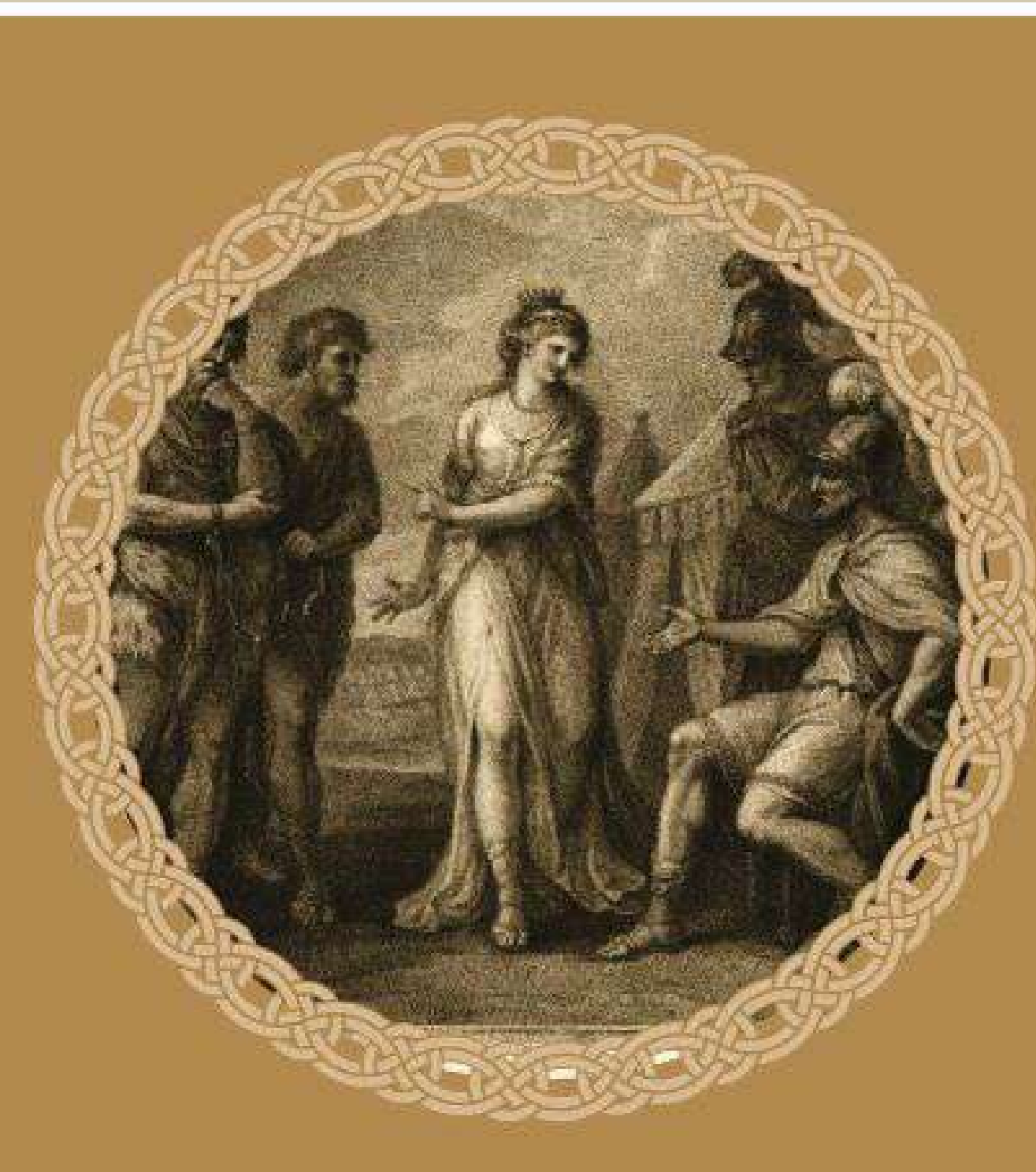


ICENI

Location: Norfolk
Leader: Boudica
The tribe was possibly the Cenimagni recorded by Julius Caesar when he invaded in 55 BCE. Except for a small-scale revolt in 48 CE, the Iceni remained a loyal client kingdom until the Boudican rebellion.

TRINOVANTES

Location: Essex, Suffolk and parts of Greater London
Leader: The Roman Governor of Britannia
By the time of the rebellion, the Trinovantes had fully become part of the province of Britannia. The tribe was enraged over the colonia at Camulodunum.



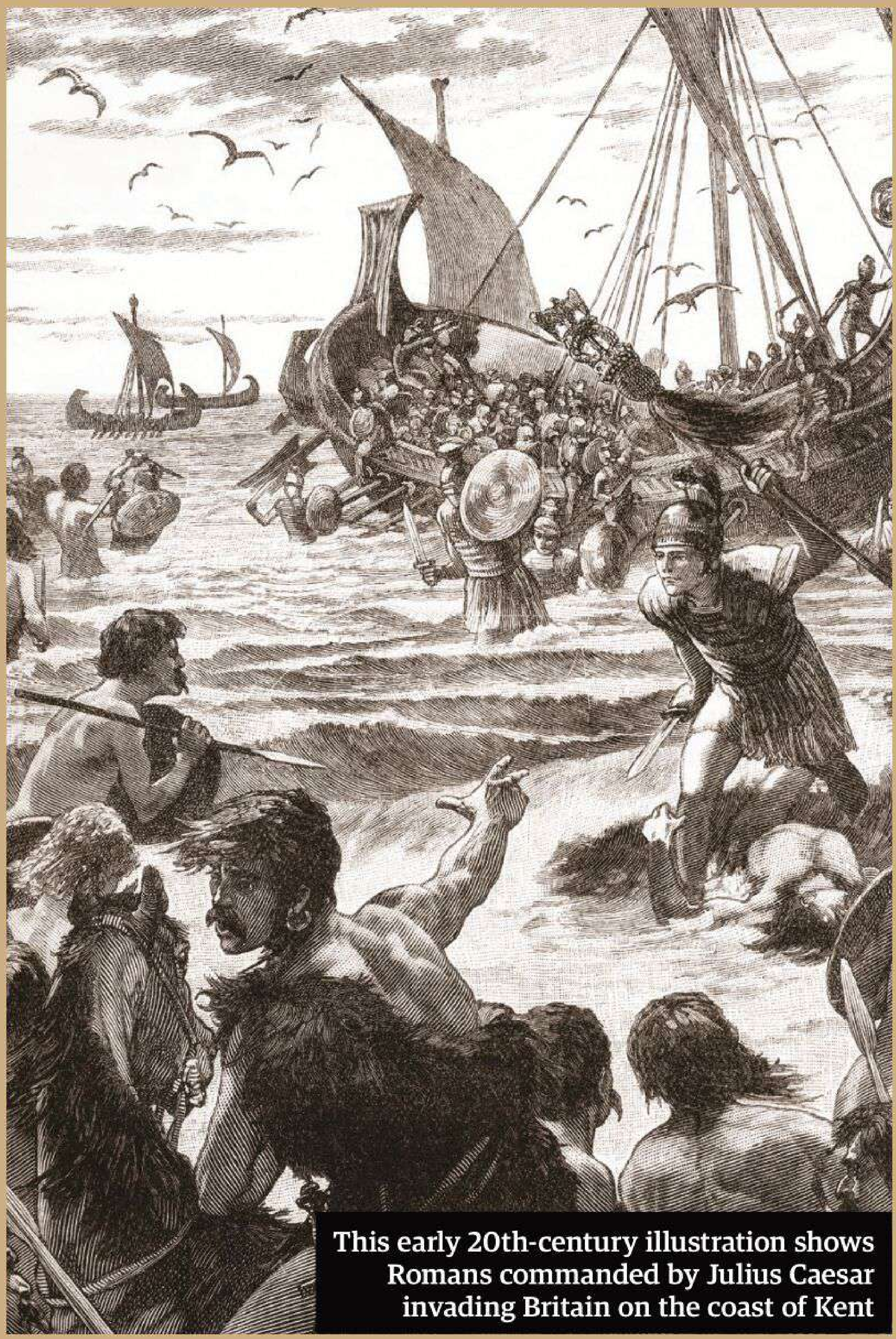
BRIGANTES

Location: Northern England and the Midlands
Leader: Cartimandua
The Romans benefited from their alliance with Cartimandua, as the vast territory of her tribe served as a buffer zone between the province and hostile tribes further north.

Unable to join the forces of Caratacus or Venutius, many discontent Britons who still wished to make a stand against the empire continued to increase Boudica's forces as she led them south into the lands of the Trinovantes. Like the Iceni, the Trinovantes harboured deep resentment towards the Romans for the past decade, and so became the second major tribe to join the revolt. While warriors from tribes all over Britannia rallied to the movement, none of the tribes contributed as much manpower as the Iceni and the Trinovantes. Both tribes were so invested in the cause that their warriors were followed by an enormous trail of carts driven by their families and loaded with their possessions. To restore their people's honour, the Iceni and the Trinovantes were willing to risk everything.

Including the women, children and elderly who accompanied the march, the British horde may have increased to well over 100,000 people, with a core of warriors that was tens of thousands strong. Confident of overwhelming any meagre force the Romans sent against her, Boudica led her army towards their first target - the colonia of Camulodunum. The town was not only the most obvious choice for the rebels to attack, as it was in line to become the capital of the province, but its destruction was also the main reason the Trinovantes joined the revolt. It was imperative the colony was burned to the ground.

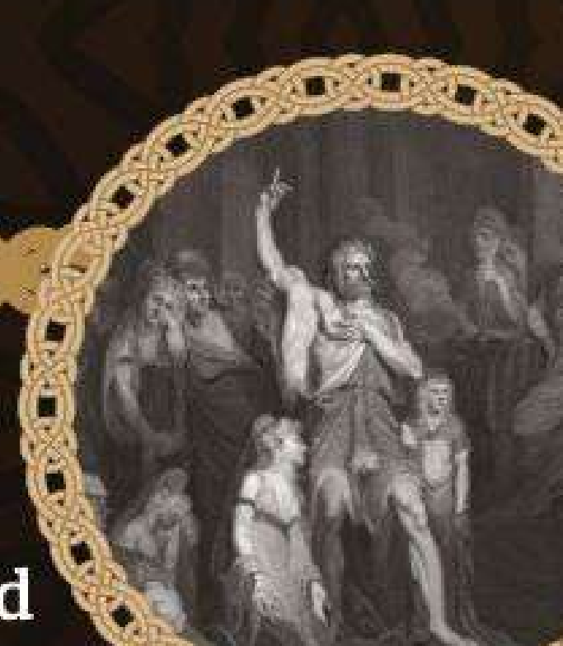
Camulodunum was once the capital of the Trinovantes until the Romans established it as a



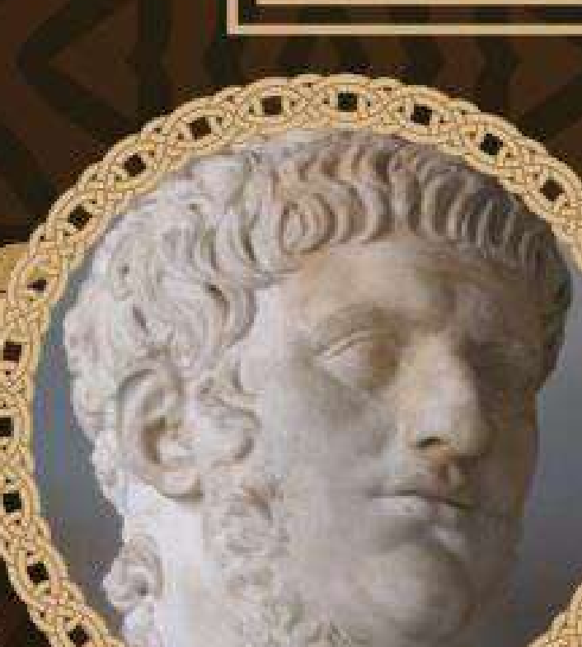
This early 20th-century illustration shows Romans commanded by Julius Caesar invading Britain on the coast of Kent

LIFE UNDER THE ROMANS

Life was difficult for the Britons under imperial rule, particularly during the first few decades after the conquest. Whereas before one king had ruled each tribe, both a governor and a procurator managed the new province of Britannia. The oppression enforced by these two officials was relentless – the Britons were mercilessly taxed to not only pay for the invasion of their own lands, but also to cover the costs of extravagant building projects like the expansion of the colonia at Camulodunum. Additionally, attempts were made to weaken the military might of the Britons by forcing their young warriors to join the Roman army on foreign campaigns. The homes of some tribes were even ransacked and deprived of all weapons. However, several loyal client kings and aristocrats benefited greatly, for they gained access to large amounts of Mediterranean trade.



51 CE
Caratacus was defeated by Governor Scapula, ending his nine-year campaign of guerrilla warfare. He attempted to seek aid from the Brigantes, but was betrayed by Queen Cartimandua.



54 CE
Nero became emperor of Rome after the death of Claudius. A period of unrest then began among the anti-Roman Brigantes, who wished to exploit the change of power in the imperial capital.

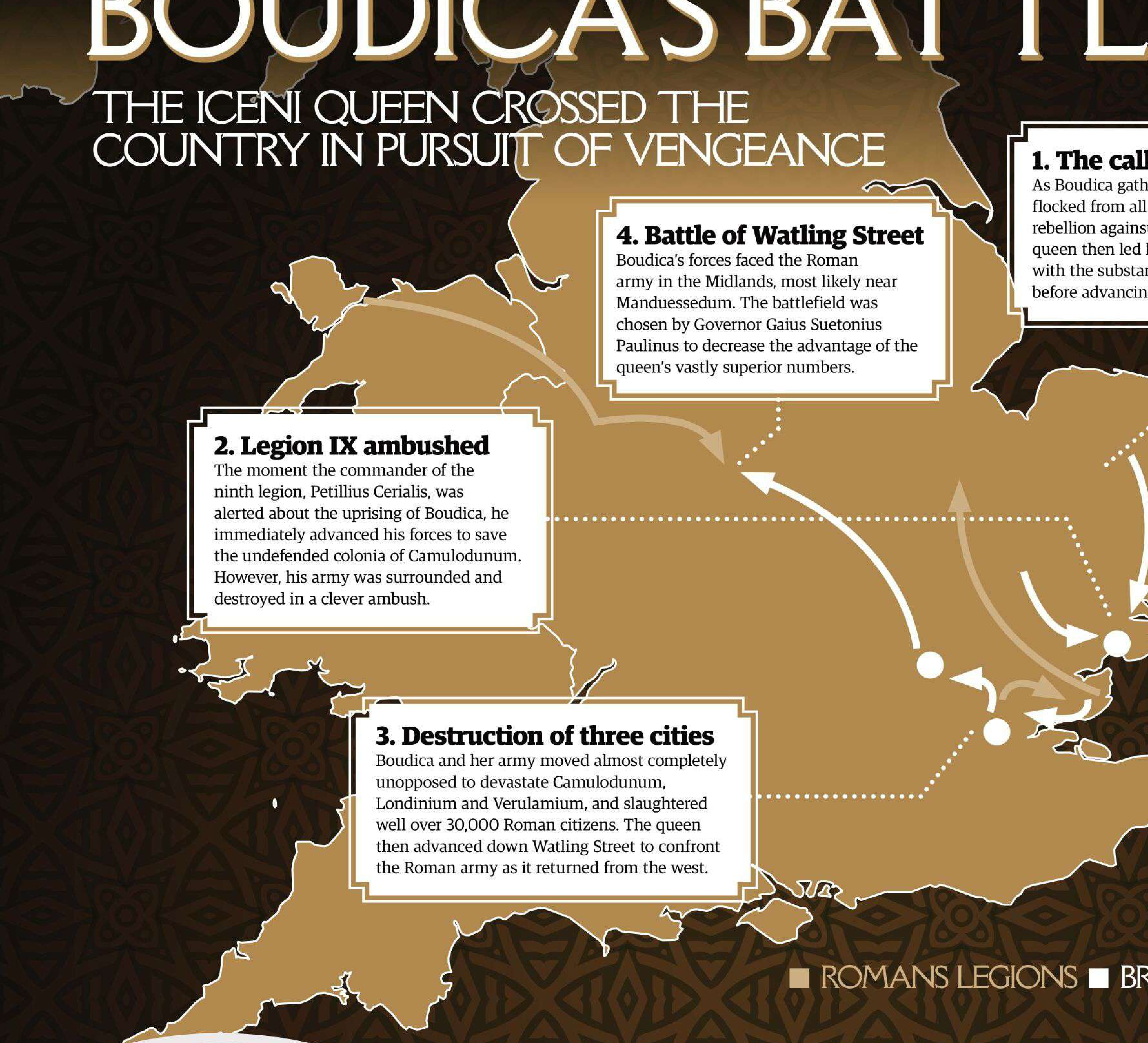
57 CE
Cartimandua divorced her husband, Venutius, and took his armour-bearer, Vellocatus, as her new consort. The queen was forced to request Roman aid to defeat the army of her ex-lover.

60 CE
The army of Governor Gaius Suetonius Paulinus assaulted the druids on the island of Mona and slaughtered them. Afterwards, he was informed about the rebellion of Boudica in the east.

69 CE
The rebels of the Brigantes exploited the chaotic state of Rome during the Year of Four Emperors. When Venutius attacked, the Romans managed to save Cartimandua, but could not save her kingdom.

BOUDICA'S BATTLE

THE ICENI QUEEN CROSSED THE COUNTRY IN PURSUIT OF VENGEANCE



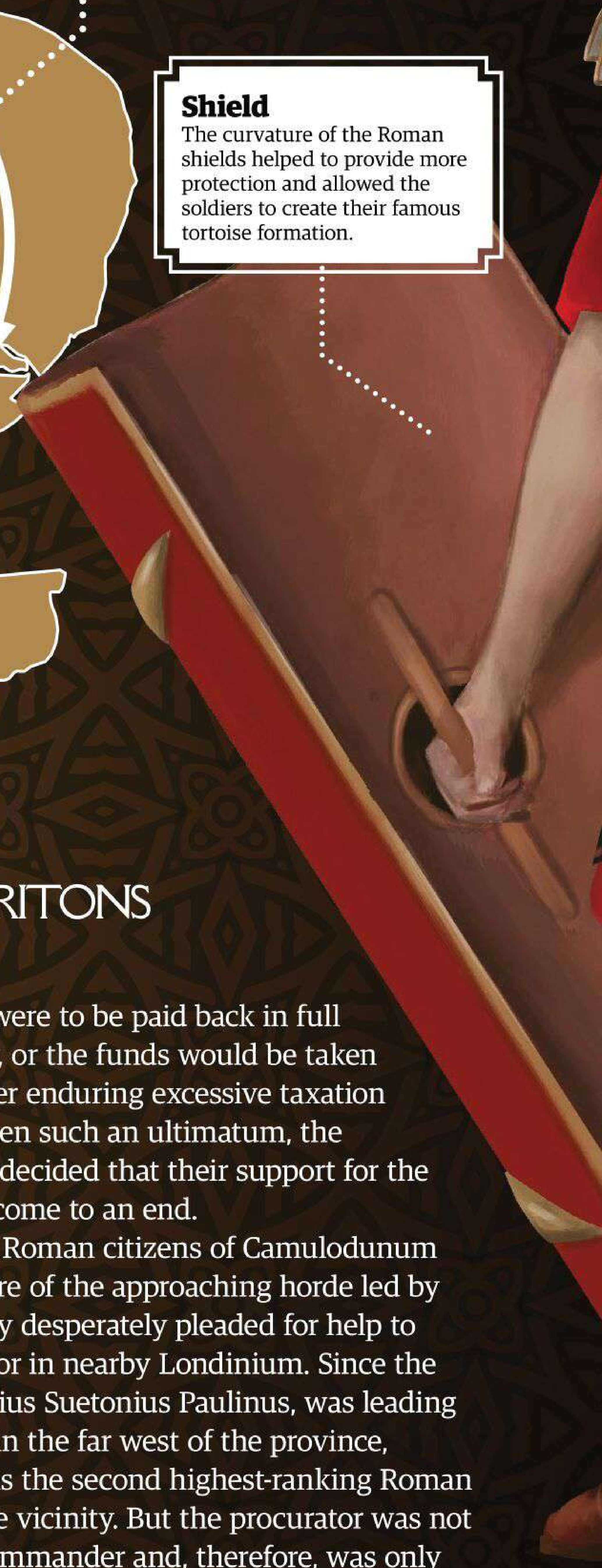
1. The call to arms
As Boudica gathered her people, warriors flocked from all over Britannia to join her rebellion against the Roman Empire. The queen then led her army south to combine with the substantial forces of the Trinovantes before advancing towards Camulodunum.

2. Legion IX ambushed
The moment the commander of the ninth legion, Petillius Cerialis, was alerted about the uprising of Boudica, he immediately advanced his forces to save the undefended colonia of Camulodunum. However, his army was surrounded and destroyed in a clever ambush.

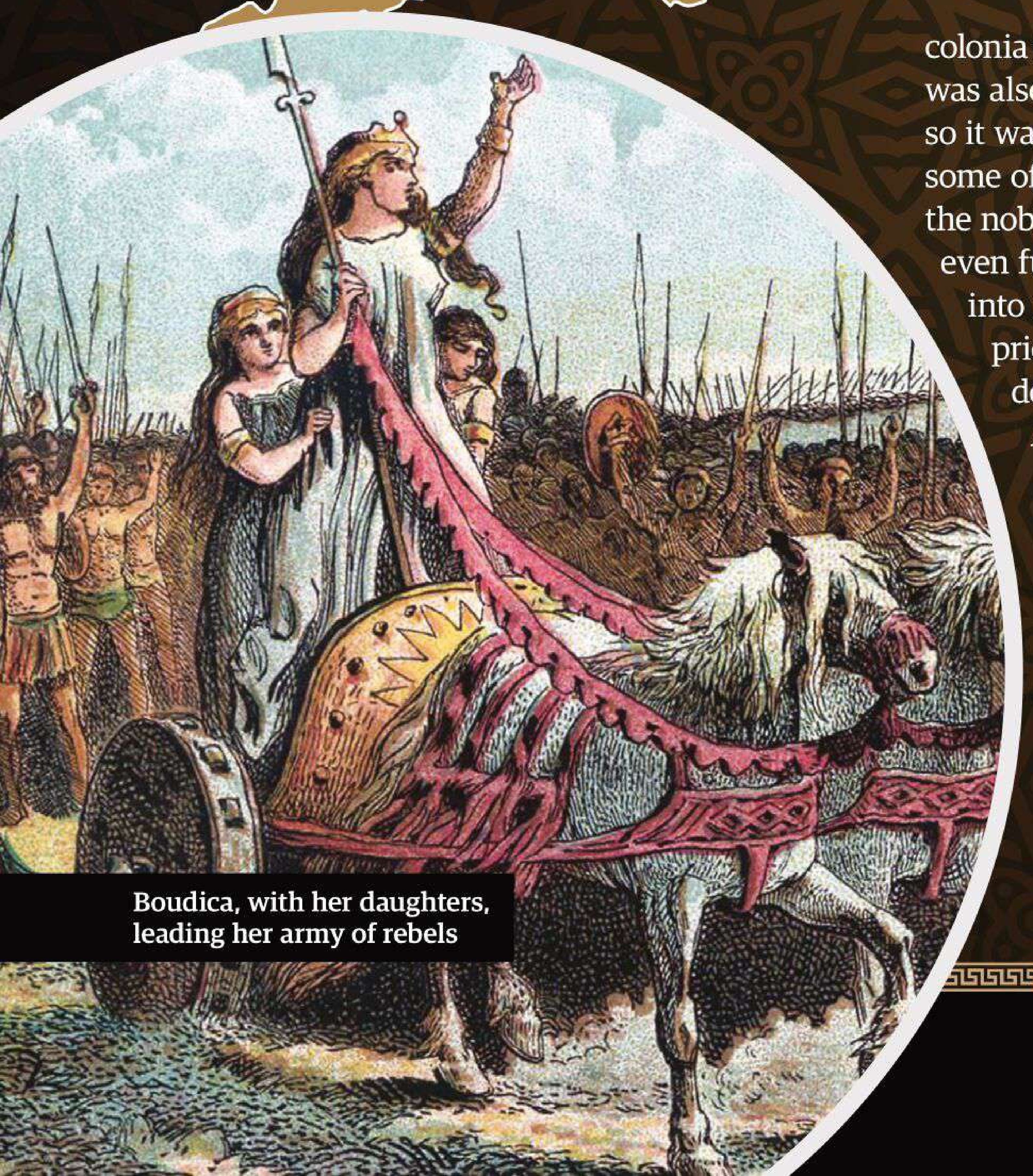
3. Destruction of three cities
Boudica and her army moved almost completely unopposed to devastate Camulodunum, Londinium and Verulamium, and slaughtered well over 30,000 Roman citizens. The queen then advanced down Watling Street to confront the Roman army as it returned from the west.

4. Battle of Watling Street
Boudica's forces faced the Roman army in the Midlands, most likely near Manduessedum. The battlefield was chosen by Governor Gaius Suetonius Paulinus to decrease the advantage of the queen's vastly superior numbers.

▨ ROMANS LEGIONS ■ BRITONS



Shield
The curvature of the Roman shields helped to provide more protection and allowed the soldiers to create their famous tortoise formation.

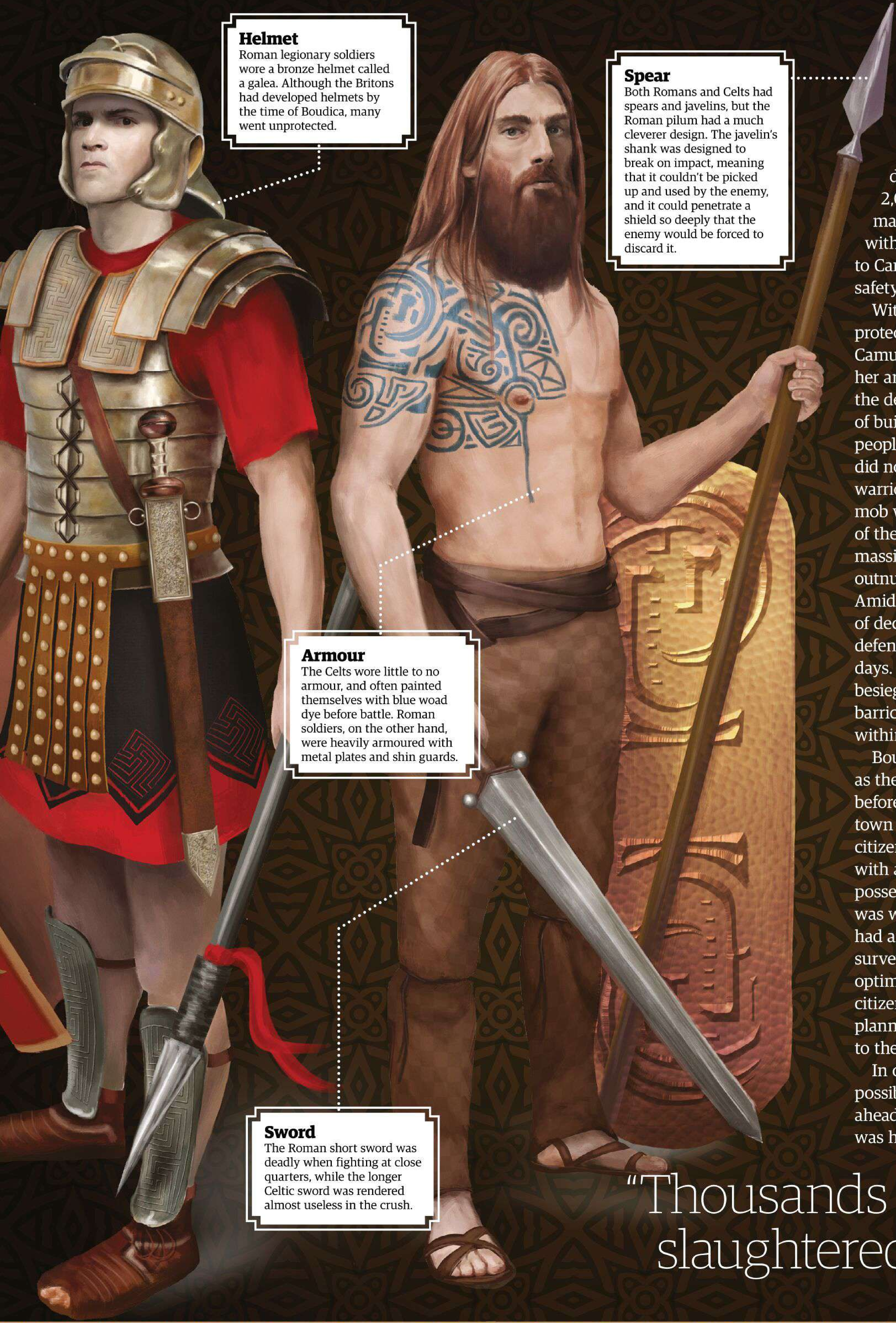


Boudica, with her daughters, leading her army of rebels

colonia for retired veterans in 50 CE. Arable land was also required for the farms of the soldiers, so it was taken from members of the tribe. As some of the strongest supporters of the Romans, the nobles of the Trinovantes were 'rewarded' even further for their loyalty with membership into the priesthood of the Augustales. As priests dedicated to the worship of the deified emperors, it was the duty of the Augustales to build the grand temple of Claudius within their former capital. To pay for the temple and the construction required to transform Camulodunum into a colonia, the Trinovantes were given considerable loans by both the Roman state and the fabulously wealthy statesman Seneca. However, the top financial officer, or procurator, of the province, Catus Decianus, had recently demanded that all loans given to the tribe were to be paid back in full immediately, or the funds would be taken by force. After enduring excessive taxation and then given such an ultimatum, the Trinovantes decided that their support for the empire had come to an end.

When the Roman citizens of Camulodunum became aware of the approaching horde led by Boudica, they desperately pleaded for help to the procurator in nearby Londinium. Since the governor, Gaius Suetonius Paulinus, was leading a campaign in the far west of the province, Decianus was the second highest-ranking Roman official in the vicinity. But the procurator was not a military commander and, therefore, was only able to send little more than 200 ill-equipped men to reinforce the small garrison already stationed in the town. Shortly afterwards, the financial official fled to Gaul in disgrace for his approval of the severe maltreatment of the Iceni

ROMANS VERSUS THE CELTS



Helmet
Roman legionary soldiers wore a bronze helmet called a galea. Although the Britons had developed helmets by the time of Boudica, many went unprotected.

Spear
Both Romans and Celts had spears and javelins, but the Roman pilum had a much cleverer design. The javelin's shank was designed to break on impact, meaning that it couldn't be picked up and used by the enemy, and it could penetrate a shield so deeply that the enemy would be forced to discard it.

Armour
The Celts wore little to no armour, and often painted themselves with blue woad dye before battle. Roman soldiers, on the other hand, were heavily armoured with metal plates and shin guards.

Sword
The Roman short sword was deadly when fighting at close quarters, while the longer Celtic sword was rendered almost useless in the crush.

and Trinovantes that led to the rebellion. What the citizens of Camulodunum did not know was that the ninth legion, led by Quintus Petillius Cerialis, was already on its way to save the town before Boudica was able to reach it. In the hope of intercepting the rebel horde, Cerialis rushed towards their presumed location. The Roman commander moved with too much haste, for he and his men were unable to detect the trap they had walked into before it was too late.

Suddenly, British warriors appeared from all directions and an onslaught ensued. Of the 2,000 soldiers under his command, only 500 made it out of the devastating ambush alive with Cerialis. Boudica continued on her course to Camulodunum as the beaten legion fled to the safety of a small fort.

With no solid defences constructed yet to protect the growing colonia, the citizens of Camulodunum watched in horror as Boudica led her army into the town, unopposed, and ordered the destruction of everything in sight. Dozens of buildings were set on fire and thousands of people were slaughtered in the streets. Boudica did not intend on taking prisoners, nor did her warriors, so any Roman caught by the armed mob was killed. The Roman soldiers and the rest of the survivors barricaded themselves within the massive temple of Claudius, but the desperately outnumbered force was completely surrounded. Amid the black smoke filling the sky and reek of decaying flesh surrounding the edifice, the defenders held off the British horde for two long days. But, by the end of the second day, the besiegers finally broke through the remaining barricades and massacred all who remained within the despised temple.

Boudica and her men pillaged as many spoils as they could find in the ruins of Camulodunum before they moved on towards the merchant town of Londinium. This time around, the citizens were aware of the advancing army, with ample time to allow them to gather their possessions and abandon the town. Yet hope was with the Romans, for Governor Paulinus had arrived with a small contingent of cavalry to survey the situation. Soon afterwards, however, optimism gave way to feelings of horror as the citizens of Londinium realized that Paulinus planned to retreat from the city and leave it open to the British marauders.

In order to reach the town as quickly as possible, the governor had been forced to travel ahead of the vast majority of his army. Since he was hopelessly outnumbered, Paulinus decided

"Thousands of people were slaughtered in the streets" to reunite with his forces and meet Boudica in a place of his choosing, where her superior numbers would not be such an advantage.

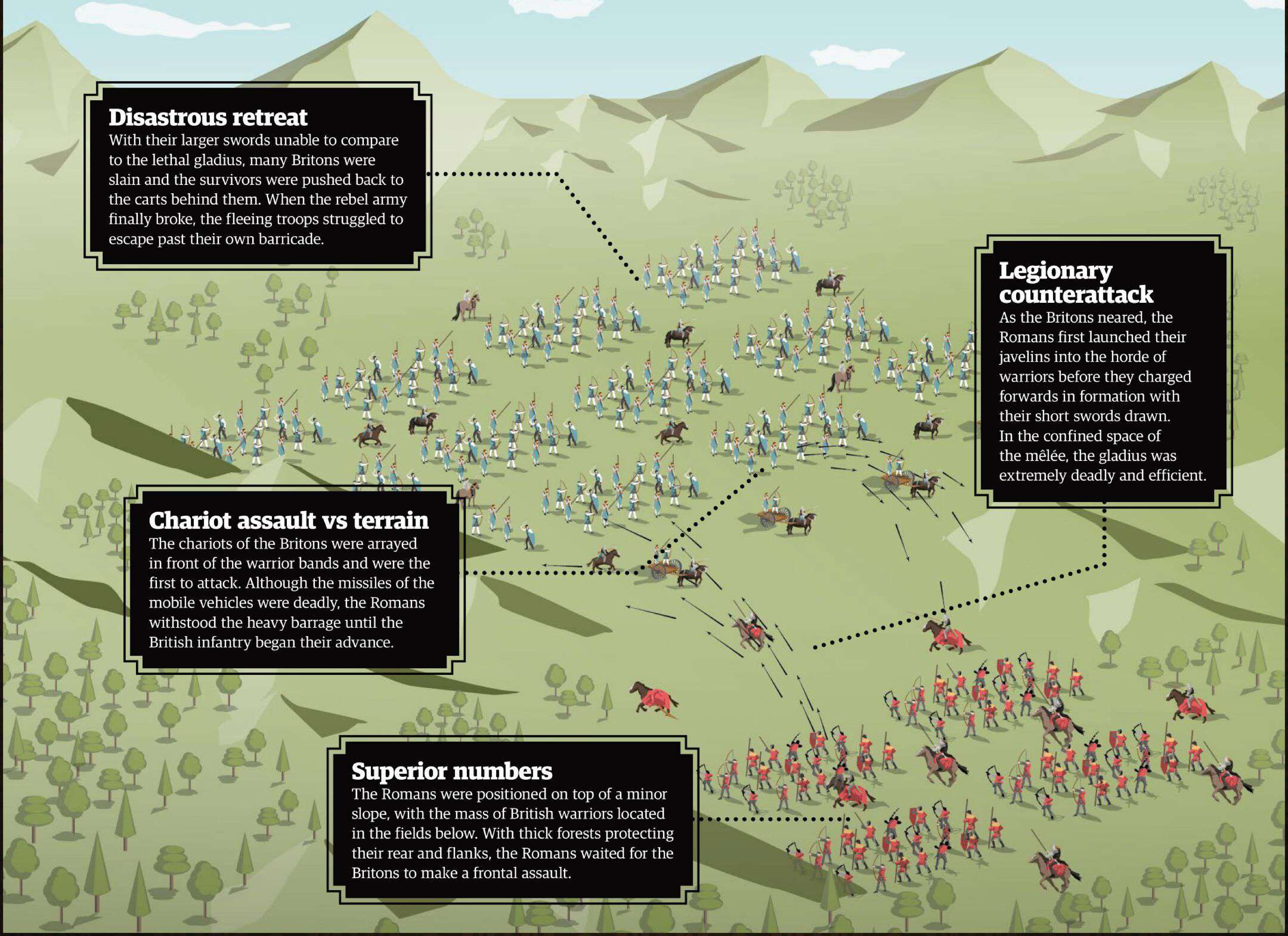
Londinium was almost deserted by the time Boudica reached it, and any Roman left behind was slain and imperial buildings were destroyed. Unspeakable atrocities were also perpetrated on some of the aristocratic women caught in the town, possibly in revenge for the crimes committed against Boudica. After the Britons mutilated their breasts and faces, these unfortunate Roman noblewomen were executed by impalement on spikes. Once the destruction of Londinium was complete and sufficient booty gathered, the horde moved on to sack another smaller town, Verulamium, before it headed down the road now known as Watling Street towards the ultimate confrontation with the Roman army under Paulinus. In her wake, Boudica left a path of destruction that may have included the deaths of as many as 70,000 Romans and Romanised Britons.

> "Any Roman left behind was slain and imperial buildings were destroyed"

The legionaries that Paulinus was forced to leave behind when he made his rapid trek east were returning from the successful invasion of the island of Mona, off the coast of Wales. As a major religious centre of the druids, Mona was perceived as a huge threat to the Romans, for the Celtic priests had long been the supporters of nearly every uprising against imperial rule across Gaul and Britannia. Therefore, when Paulinus became the governor of Britannia in 58 CE, he made it his top priority to crush all resistance on Mona and massacre all of the rebel priests found there. After their major triumph against the druids, the legionaries were highly motivated to eradicate the British insurgents of Boudica.

After the devastation of Verulamium, Boudica continued down Watling Street as Paulinus gathered his forces. With only Legion XX, some units from Legion XIV and auxiliaries, as well as the small remnant of Legion IX, Paulinus' army only numbered about 10,000 soldiers. The governor would have had slightly more men at his disposal, but the commander of Legion II failed to muster his troops and combine with the forces of Paulinus. Boudica, on the other hand, led a horde of hundreds of thousands that

BATTLE OF WATLING STREET

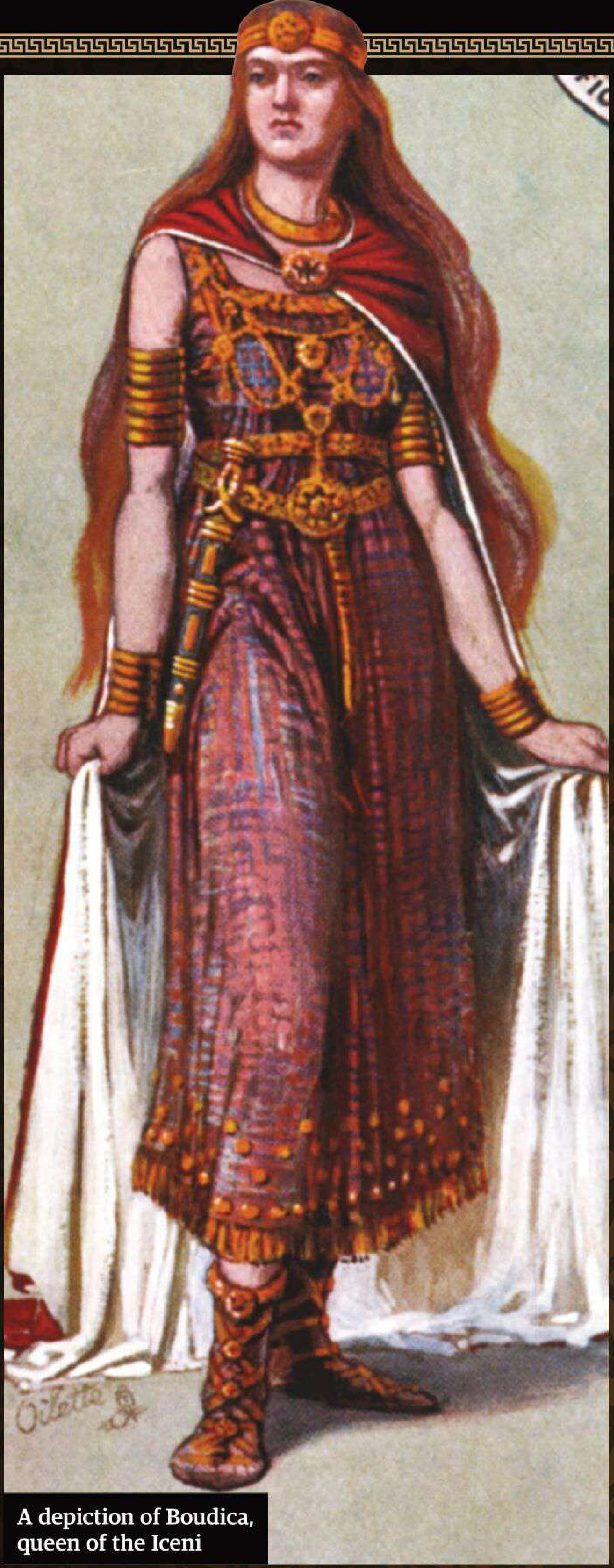


Disastrous retreat
With their larger swords unable to compare to the lethal gladius, many Britons were slain and the survivors were pushed back to the carts behind them. When the rebel army finally broke, the fleeing troops struggled to escape past their own barricade.

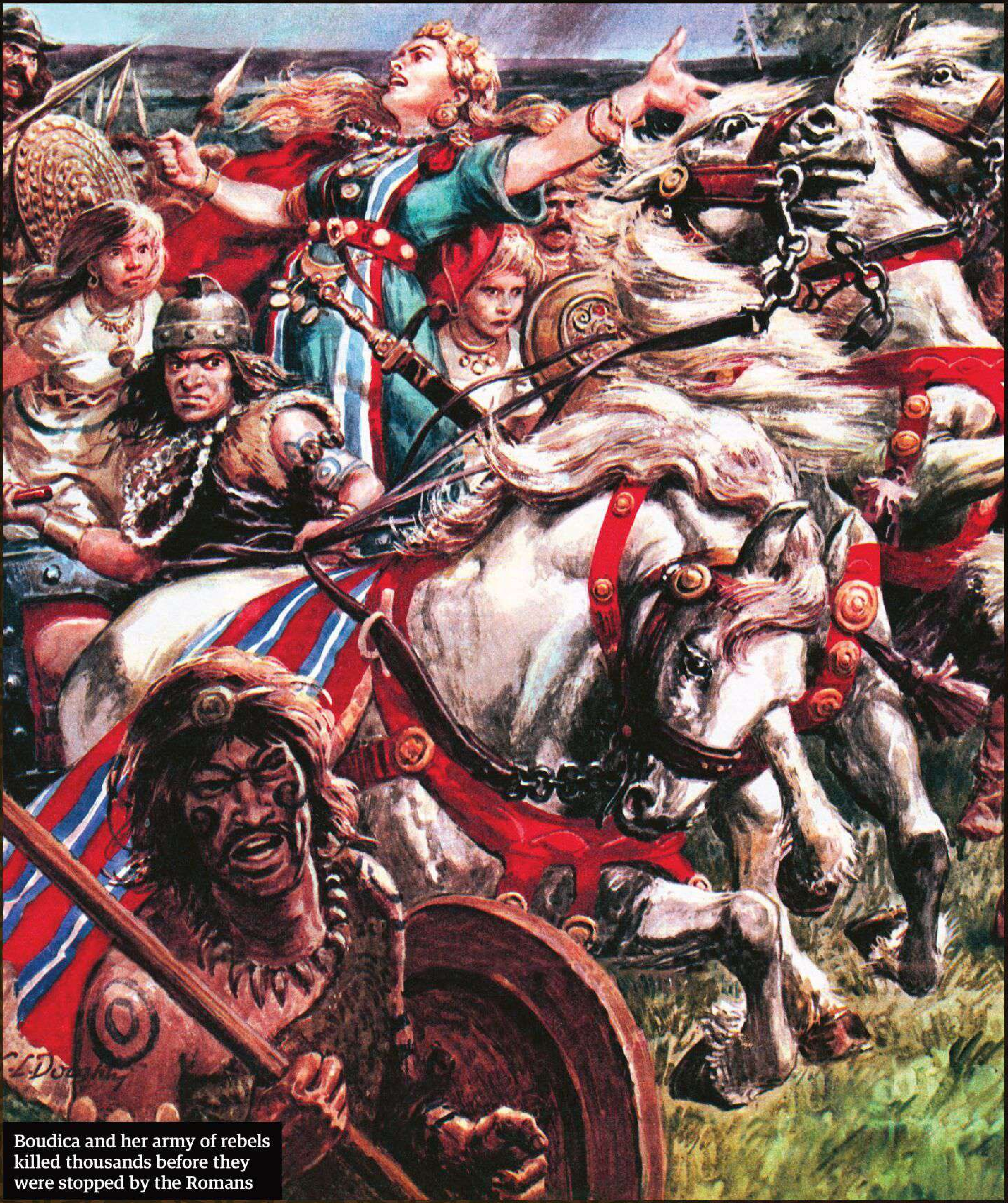
Legionary counterattack
As the Britons neared, the Romans first launched their javelins into the horde of warriors before they charged forwards in formation with their short swords drawn. In the confined space of the mêlée, the gladius was extremely deadly and efficient.

Chariot assault vs terrain
The chariots of the Britons were arrayed in front of the warrior bands and were the first to attack. Although the missiles of the mobile vehicles were deadly, the Romans withstood the heavy barrage until the British infantry began their advance.

Superior numbers
The Romans were positioned on top of a minor slope, with the mass of British warriors located in the fields below. With thick forests protecting their rear and flanks, the Romans waited for the Britons to make a frontal assault.



A depiction of Boudica, queen of the Iceni



Boudica and her army of rebels killed thousands before they were stopped by the Romans

may have consisted of as many as 230,000. But Paulinus had two advantages – the training and discipline of his men, and the fact that they were all battle-ready soldiers.

When Boudica finally reached the Romans in the Midlands, they were most likely positioned near Manduessedum. Paulinus had chosen an ideal location to assemble his men, with a thick forest behind them and slopes protecting their flanks. The legionaries formed the centre of the army with auxiliary units on each side and cavalry contingents on the wings. The warrior bands of Boudica's massive host gathered before the Roman legions, brandishing their swords and screaming war cries as Boudica rode along the front lines in a chariot with her daughters. As her long hair flowed in the wind, the tall warrior queen raised her powerful voice above the tumult to give a rousing speech that reminded her troops of the cruelty and oppression they were fighting against. On the other side of the field, Paulinus also raised the confidence of his men through very direct words. He emphasised their extensive training, for them to see that their professionalism was a much greater asset than overwhelming numbers.

When the two forces collided at the Battle of Watling Street, the chariots of the Britons wreaked havoc down the Roman lines. However, the large infantries of each army inevitably clashed and the superior equipment and martial skills of the Romans won the day. Furthermore, when the Britons broke and fled from the slaughter caused by the deadly Roman short swords, they were trapped by the semi-circle of carts and could not escape.

In the end, everything in the path of the victorious legionaries was slain, including women, children and the pack animals travelling with the Britons. In defeat, Boudica drank poison, choosing to end her own life rather than fall into the hands of the Romans. Although ultimately unsuccessful at removing the Romans from Britannia, she had her revenge with the deaths of thousands of her imperial oppressors. In fact, so much devastation had occurred that Emperor Nero nearly gave up on the fragile fledgling province, for it was more costly to maintain than financially beneficial. He would have done so if it were not for the courageous efforts of Paulinus. Afterwards, the governor went on to continue the savagery of the Romans, focusing his brutality primarily on the remaining Iceni and Trinovantes until they were sufficiently subdued. Boudica may have achieved the vengeance she sought, but the sad truth is that her people faced even more oppression after her death because of her actions against the empire.

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BRITAIN AGAINST ROME

The Romans faced numerous instances of resistance, rebellions, usurpations and invasions during their long rule of Britain

Written by Marc DeSantis

The initial invasion of Britain by the Romans under Emperor Claudius was successful, but that did not spell the end of all resistance on the island. Britain would be the scene of sustained fighting against the Romans by those who resented becoming inhabitants of the new province of Britannia, as well as those who lived outside of it to the north. Perhaps the most famous, and the most harrowing, was the revolt led by Boudica, queen of the Iceni, in 60 CE, but there were others.

THE SILURIAN UPRISING

Not long after the Roman invasion, around 50 CE, there was a native uprising in the north of Britain by the Brigantes. It faltered swiftly, with the ringleaders being executed by their fellow tribesmen. The tribe of the Silures in Wales, however, persisted in defying Rome. They were aided in their rebellion by Caratacus, the famous son of King Cunobelinus of the Catuvellauni, who had fought the Romans when they had first invaded. Caratacus chose a battle site where all of the advantages of terrain would favour the Britons, and to supplement the natural strength of the chosen site, which included a river, the Britons built fortifications. Caratacus went from place to place encouraging all of his warriors, telling them that they were fighting to win back their freedom - if they failed, they'd be slaves to Rome forever. Knowing what was at stake, the men swore they would never give up any ground.

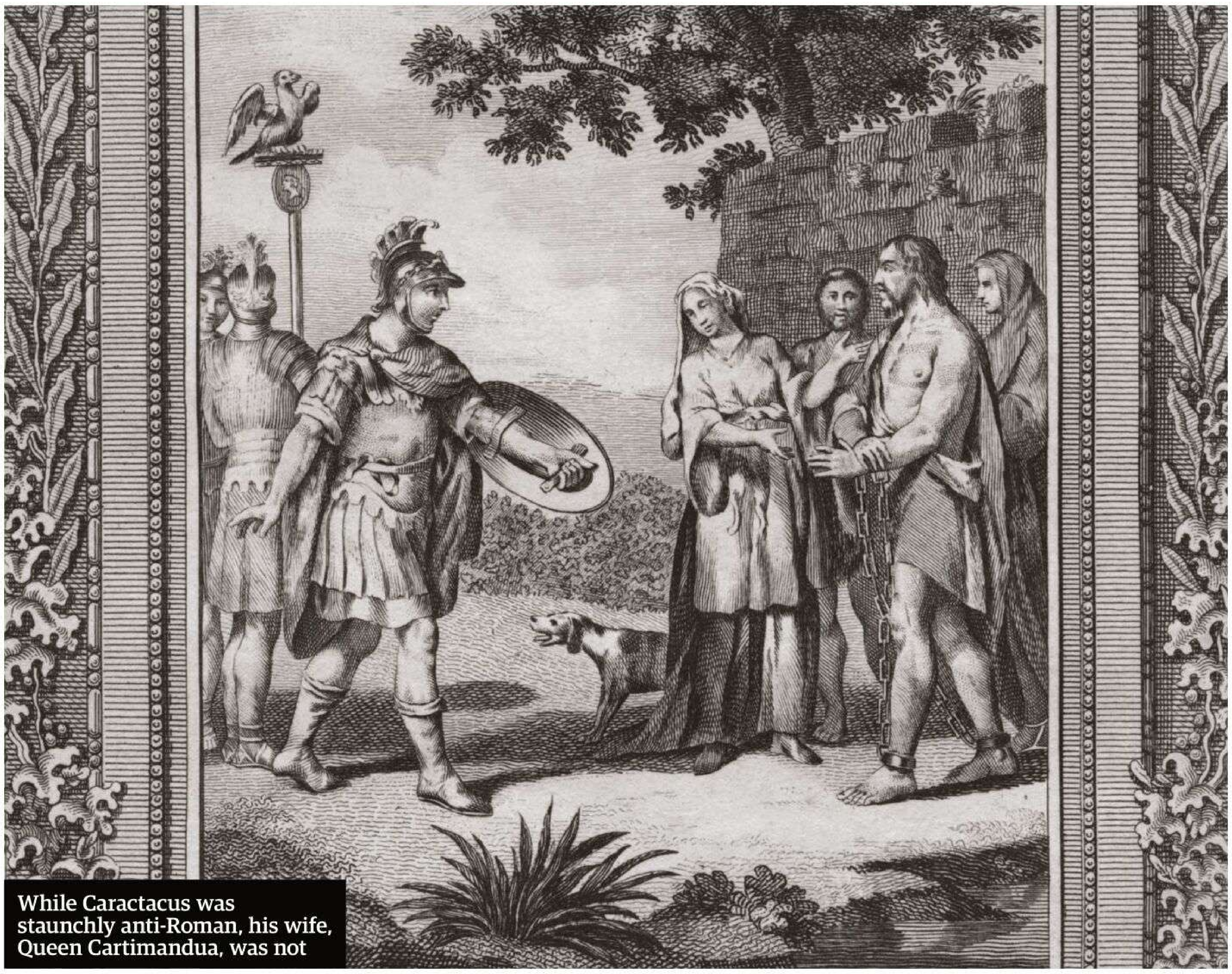
The Roman general Publius Ostorius Scapula was shocked to see the dauntless Silures positioned behind natural and man-made obstacles. His men were equally courageous and insisted that he let them make an attack, so they crossed the river, assumed a testudo, or 'tortoise', formation with their shields above their heads and to their sides, got close to the fortifications and tore them down. The heavily armoured legionaries prevailed over the unarmoured Britons and won a great victory. Caratacus fled the field and (unwisely) sought refuge with Queen Cartimandua of the Brigantes, but she quickly turned him over to the Romans. Brought to Rome, Emperor Claudius pardoned Caratacus and gave him his freedom.

> The Romans realised that the best way to rule Britain at the start was to separate the tribes from each other so that they couldn't join forces

AGRICOLA GOES NORTH

Southern Britain after the suppression of the revolt of the Iceni in 61 CE was firmly under Roman control, but the same could not be said of the north. There, beyond the frontier, lay tribes that raided the

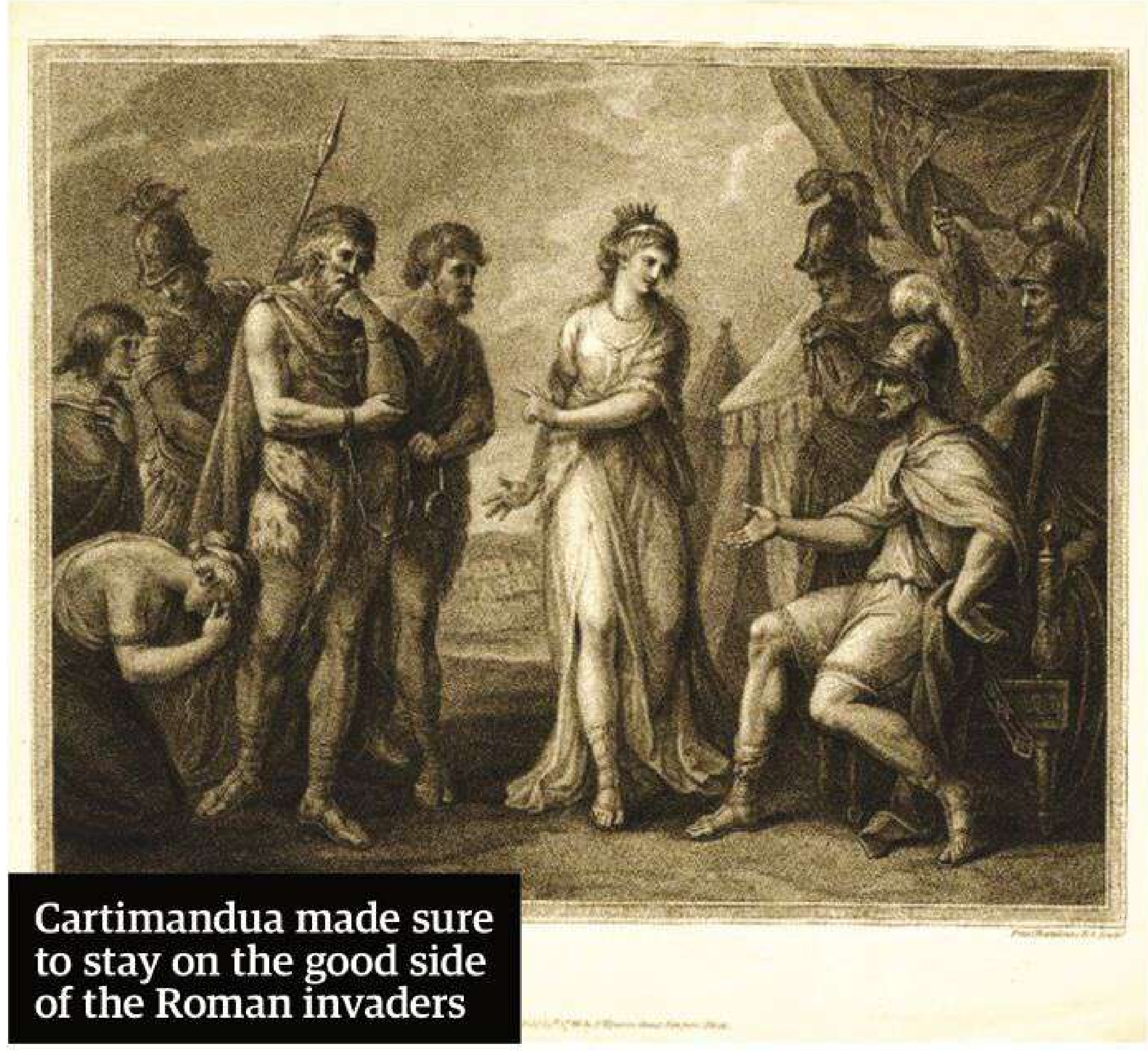
The tough and aggressive Septimius Severus led a major imperial expedition against the British tribes living north of the frontier



While Caractacus was staunchly anti-Roman, his wife, Queen Cartimandua, was not

newly established Roman province of Britannia. Gnaeus Julius Agricola gained immortality through the pen of his son-in-law Tacitus, Rome's greatest historian, who wrote about him in *The Agricola*. His deeds merited the ink. There was serious unrest in Britain when Agricola arrived in 78 CE to serve as governor of the province, so he smashed the Ordovices in Wales and captured the Druidic stronghold on Anglesey. He made his next target the Brigantes in Yorkshire, pulverised them, and then advanced up to the line of the Solway and Tyne, where Hadrian's Wall would one day rise. The next year, Agricola solidified Rome's hold on modern northwestern England by battling the local tribes and building forts. In 80 CE he was at the Tay, and in the following campaigning season of 81 CE Agricola was constructing forts along the narrow neck running from the Firth of Forth to the Firth of Clyde.

Campaigning in Scotland continued into 82 CE, with Agricola reaching the sea and spying Ireland over it. In 83 CE the Romans, advancing in conjunction with their offshore fleet, were battling hard against the fierce Caledonians. These intrepid Britons struck at Roman forts and even came close to overrunning the legionary marching camp of IX Hispana before being repelled.



Cartimandua made sure to stay on the good side of the Roman invaders

The last year of Agricola's British campaign, 84 CE, saw him bring a massive Caledonian army to battle at Mons Graupius. The ensuing encounter was a complete victory for the Romans, being won wholly by the auxiliaries, without need to commit the legions to the actual fighting.

THE IMPERIAL EXPEDITION OF SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS

In 208 CE, the 63-year-old Septimius Severus, emperor of Rome, set off for Britain to lead an imperial expedition against the barbarian tribes of the north of the island. The reasons for the undertaking are murky – there may have been a serious uprising by the Brigantes, or invasions by the Caledonians into the province of Britannia. Certainly, Severus saw the need to bring a large force of legions and auxiliary units from the Continent to quash whomever was causing trouble.

IMP CONSTANTIVS PIVS FELIX AVG
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A medallion struck by Constantius Chlorus in honour of his capture of London in 296 CE

> "The Caledonians avoided a collision with the formidable Roman legions and instead fought a guerilla war"

Bringing along his wife, Julia, and his two sons, Caracalla and Geta, Severus established his headquarters at Eboracum (York) and in short order accepted the submission of several northern British kings. This was evidently not enough for Severus to give up his plans, and he made preparations for an immense invasion of the north. In 209 CE, accompanied by Caracalla, Severus led Roman forces to the far north of the island. The Caledonians of the Scottish Highlands avoided a head-on confrontation with the formidable legions and instead fought a guerilla war, which claimed many Roman lives. Nevertheless, Severus was successful and took the title of Britannicus in honour of his victory over them.

A rebellion of the Maeatae in the Lowlands occasioned another season of campaigning in 210 CE. This was suppressed by Severus, who would die at York in February 211. It may well have been Severus' intention to bring the whole of the island under Roman control if the remains of a permanent fortress built at Carpow in Perthshire in this period is any indication. If so, his plan went unfulfilled, and northern Britain would remain outside the empire forever.

> Septimius Severus' family continued to rule Rome for another 24 years after his death, the Severan dynasty finally ending in 235 CE when Alexander Severus died

BREAKAWAY BRITAIN

The Roman Empire was beset by many troubles in the mid 3rd century, not least of which were repeated barbarian invasions. With the central government incapable of protecting the whole of the empire, several provinces broke away and looked to their own defence. In the west, Gaul and Britain seceded from Roman control in 259 CE, forming the 'Gallic Empire'. Though Gaul was recovered by imperial authorities in 274, Britain itself would again leave the fold. In 286, Carausius, a senior Roman officer appointed to guard the British and Gallic coasts against raiding Franks and Saxons, seized control of Britain.

A Roman naval attack on Carausius in 288–89 failed, but a coup in 293 succeeded in bringing the usurper down, and he was replaced by his treasurer, Allectus. In 296, the 'Caesar' of the Western Roman Empire, Constantius Chlorus, undertook another naval attack on Britain. The Roman naval force sailed in two squadrons. The first, under Constantius, departed Bononia (Boulogne) on the Channel coast and headed for Kent. The second, under his praetorian prefect, Asclepiodotus, left the mouth of the Seine and aimed for the coast north of the Isle of Wight. Mist hid Asclepiodotus' fleet as it approached from Allectus, and it landed without being intercepted.

Allectus retreated, met the army of Asclepiodotus in battle along the way to Londinium (London) and was defeated, with the usurper himself perishing in the fighting. The remnants of Allectus' army then made for London, but some of Constantius' ships had sailed up the Thames and arrived there ahead of them. Constantius soon entered London in triumph. Britain was firmly back in Roman hands.

THE GREAT CONSPIRACY

Britain was largely spared the barbarian attacks that convulsed the rest of the empire in the 3rd century, but this time of relative peace would not last forever. The Saxons, a Germanic tribe inhabiting modern Germany, took to their ships to raid the coasts of Britain. So harmful were their depredations that in the 4th century the empire appointed a senior officer, the comes litoris Saxonici, or Count of the Saxon Shore, to defend the coasts of eastern and southern Britain.

In 367 CE, a huge coalition of Picts, Scoti, Attacotti and Saxons of northern Britain descended on Britannia from many directions, and the Count of the Saxon Shore was slain in the fighting. The invaders were helped in their 'Great Conspiracy', as it became known, by renegade British irregulars who delivered intelligence to them about the Romans. Once the invasion was underway desertion among Roman units became rife. In late 367 CE Emperor Valentinian I sent Count Theodosius, the father of the later emperor Theodosius I, to the beleaguered island with several regiments to take charge of its defence. In that year Theodosius took London and gathered up the soldiers who had deserted their units. In 368 CE, Theodosius cleared out the roving barbarian warbands and brought peace to Britain.

Serious attacks by Picts, Scoti and Saxons continued later in the century. By the turn of the 5th century the Western Roman Empire was itself so weakened and so preoccupied with simply defending Italy that it could not supply aid to the Britons when requested in 410 CE. From now on, Britain would be on its own, fighting a long, twilight struggle against her invaders.

JVLIVS
AGRI
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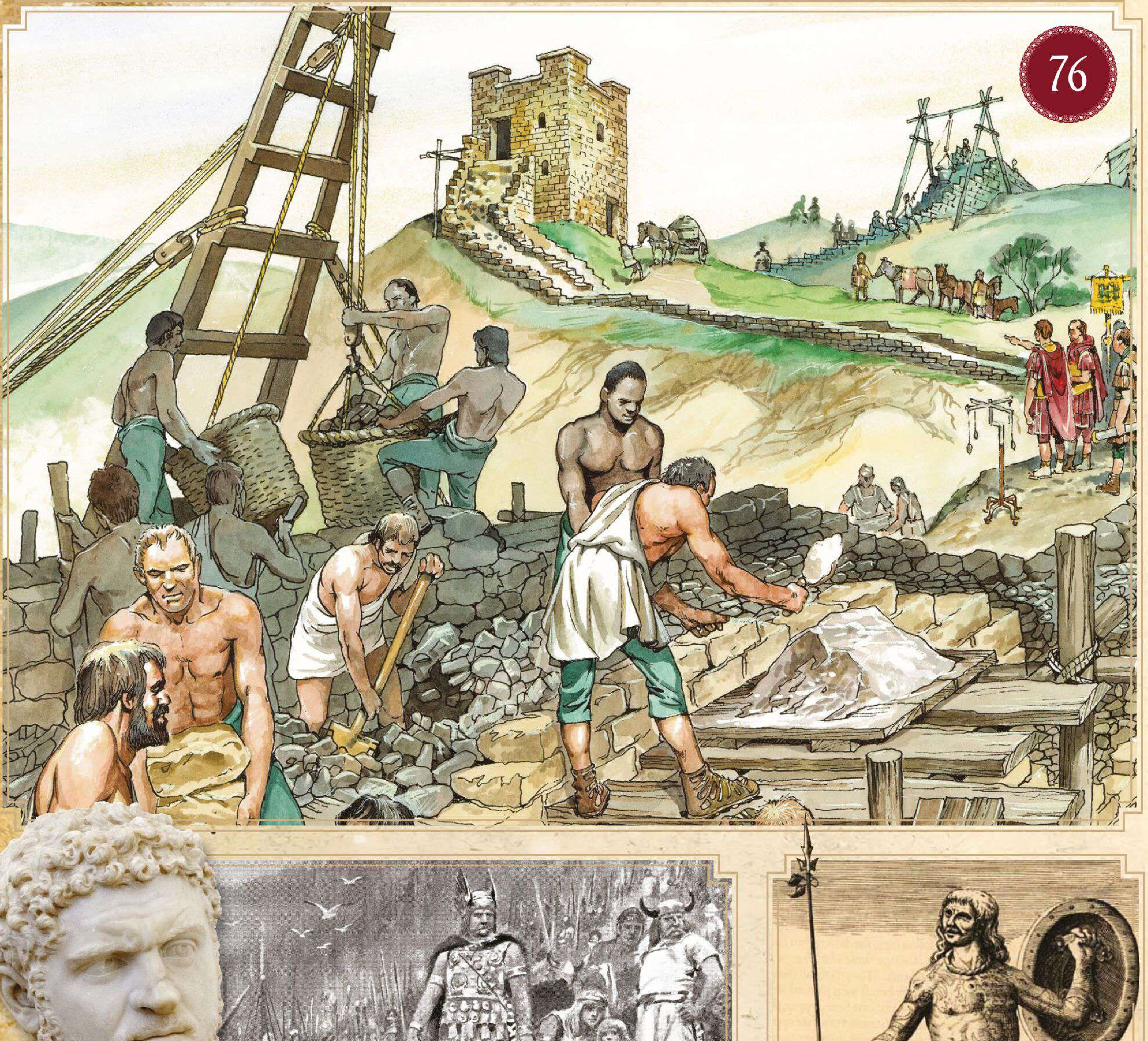
Gnaeus Julius Agricola defeated many British tribes and advanced Roman arms into the far north of the island

© Getty Images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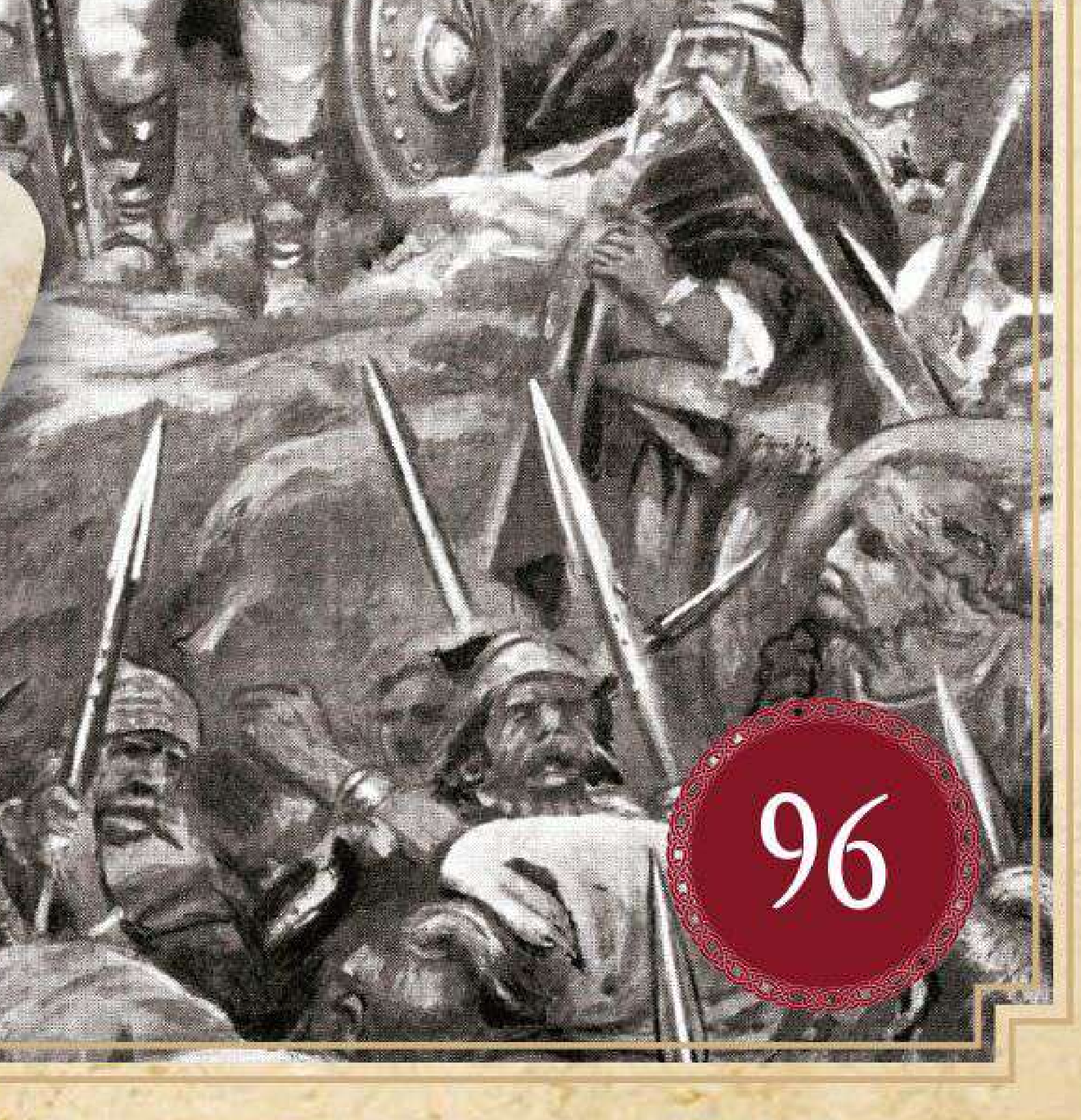
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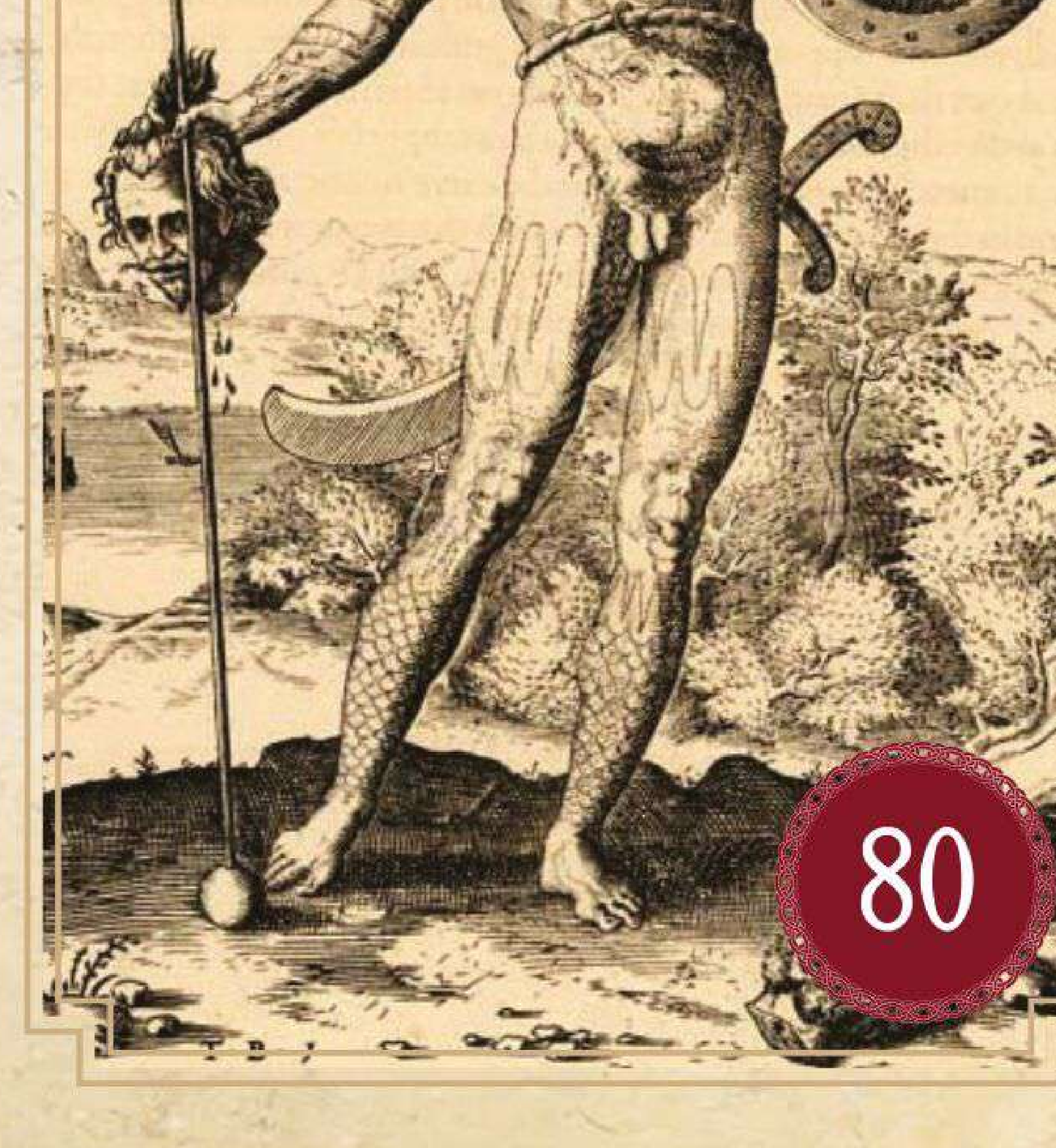
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ROMAN RULE

With Britannia now fully under Roman control, it was time to figure out how to keep it that way

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RULING BRITANNIA

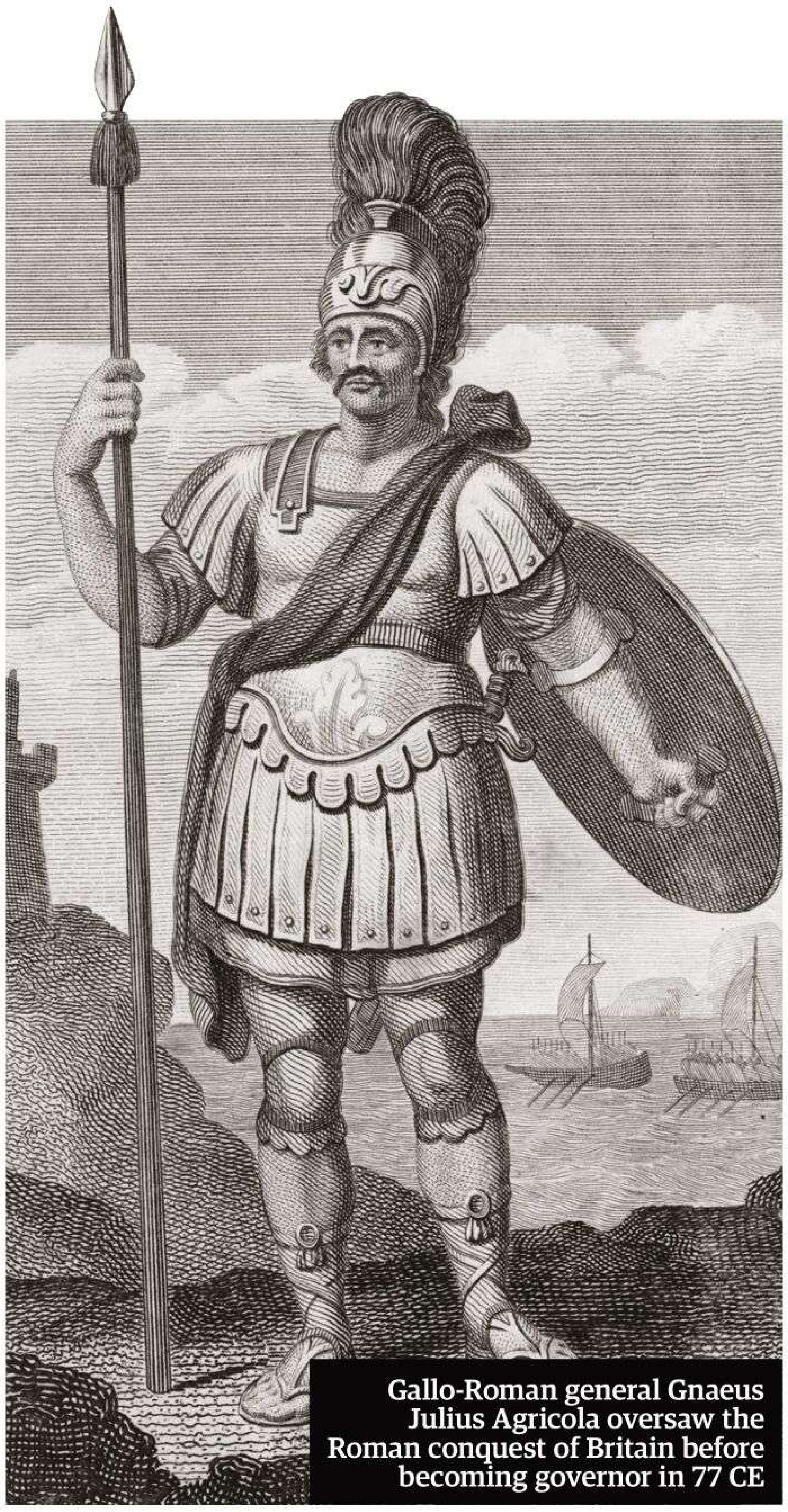
When Britannia became a province of the Roman Empire, it was run in much the same way as other outposts – marking a huge change from centuries of tribal rule

Written by **David Crookes**

Before the Roman army landed on the beaches of Britain in 43 CE the country had been ruled by Celtic tribes, some of which had fiercely resisted the foreign invaders only to quickly admit defeat in the face of sheer force. Following that year, the Roman Empire wasted little time in exerting its power and influence. It viewed Britannia as a single entity and sought to rule this new imperial province with a strong governmental structure. Given the inhabitants had little experience of organised administration this was no mean feat, but it proved to be highly effective indeed.

Initially, the Romans forced the existing tribes to act on their behalf, but very soon they were able to get them onside by offering incentives. Key to this was a decision by Emperor Claudius – who had sent Aulus Plautius to invade Britannia with four legions in a bid to secure its valuable mines and slaves – to allow the most prestigious of tribal leaders to become client monarchs.

This paved the way for trusted, indirect rule, granting those who were appointed as a client monarch the right to decide on local or religious matters without overbearing input from Rome. But while it didn't always work out well (Boudica was a client queen of the British Celtic Iceni tribe and she led an uprising against the invading Romans in 60 CE), in tapping into already established local structures, the empire didn't have to exhaust its own manpower to keep order. Indeed, it needed only to ensure that the client monarchs swore their allegiance to the empire and that the hierarchy above them was also fiercely loyal to Rome. Prestige was thereby bestowed upon the tribal rulers by Roman patronage, and they may have even gained the support of auxiliary soldiers.

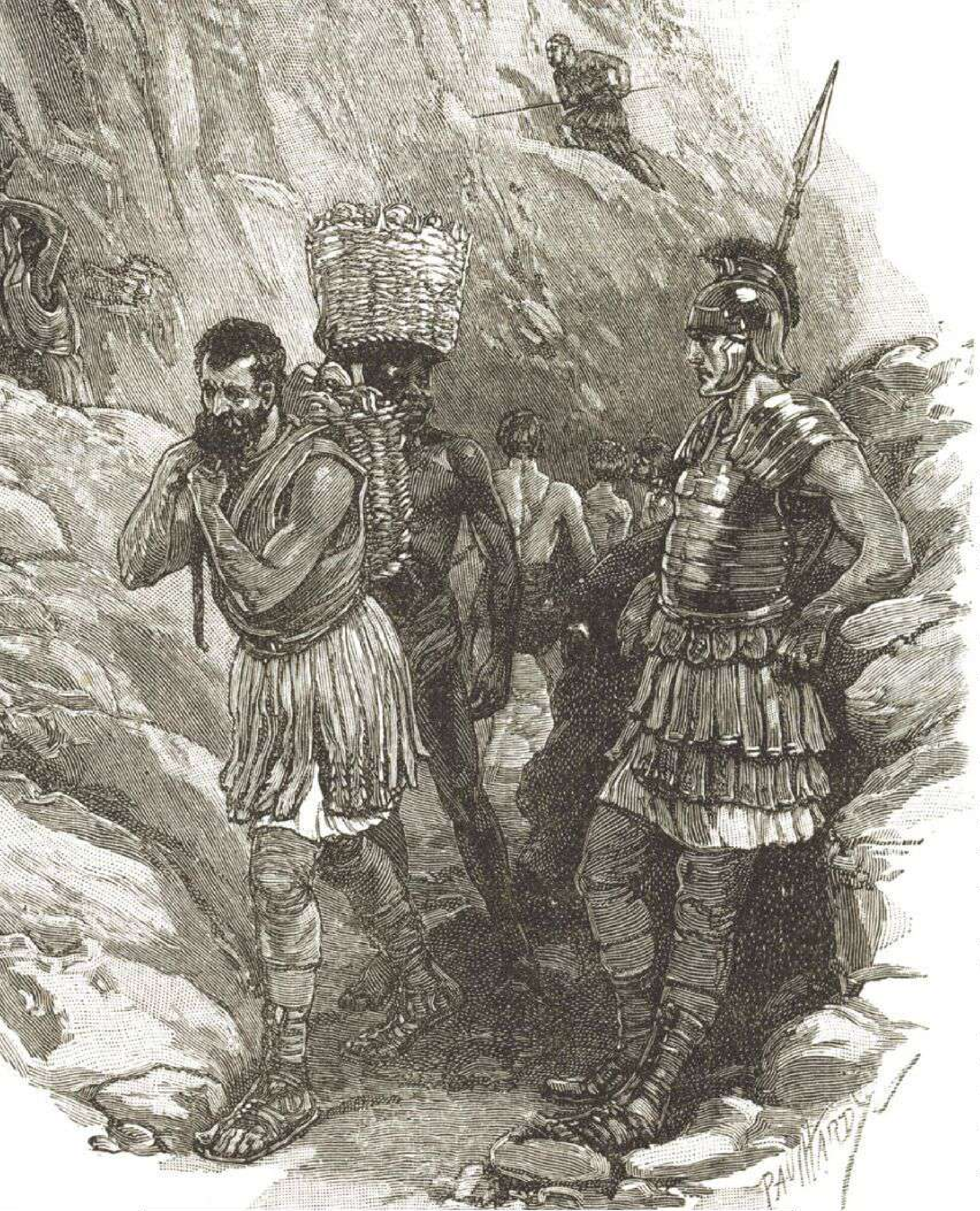

Gallo-Roman general Gnaeus Julius Agricola oversaw the Roman conquest of Britain before becoming governor in 77 CE

As such it was a rather shrewd move. Drawing upon existing social hierarchies meant resistance was reduced, and it allowed Britannia to be easily structured around the former Celtic territories that had long been defined. Many were turned into independent administrative centres known as 'civitates', with each individual civitas being self-governed. As well as allowing former tribal leaders such power within these domains, it also saw a sharp rise in the number of people who considered themselves to be Roman citizens.

Overseeing the administrative centres was a governor, a high-ranking Roman military officer, or legatus. The governor would eventually rule from London and generally be in place for three years, although there were cases when they ruled for longer – Agricola was in place for seven. Governors owned property worth at least 1 million sestertii and they were so highly placed that they would be in charge of the military, religious functions and civilian matters.

Yet despite such power, the Roman emperor – who always treated Britannia as a single entity, “Administrative roles ensured the smooth running of a country once marred by tribal in-fighting”

Publius Ostorius Scapula became Britain’s second governor from 47 CE until his death, serving under Emperor Claudius



Centurions are thought to have been put in charge of operations such as running imperial mines and escorting cargoes of grain

even when it was eventually split into two and then four provinces – remained the most important person. Emperors believed it was important to keep control of provinces such as Britannia since they had large numbers of troops. Doing so would prevent governors becoming too powerful.

As if to underline that point, governors were highly experienced former consuls but their wings were clipped to some degree. In an attempt to prevent them from being on the same level as the emperor, they were called legatus Augusti pro praetore, and their powers were propraetorian.

What's more, recognising that having one person to oversee all of Britannia's affairs – both legal and military – could be overwhelming. The Flavians (a powerful dynasty that ruled the Roman Empire between 69 and 96 CE) even added a secondary governor for judicial matters called the legatus Augusti iuridicus.

Both were aided by the equestrians – the people who made up the second of the Ancient Roman property-based classes. Emperors tended to trust the equestrians more than those of senatorial rank, but to enter this class they still needed substantial property values of a minimum of 400,000 sestertii.

Top of this group of people was the fiscal procurator (procurator Augusti) who worked alongside the imperial governor, reporting direct to the emperor. It was his job to collect land tax, poll tax and an imperial duty on the carriage of goods on the public highways. He would also manage the mines, collect rent on land belonging to imperial estates and distribute pay to public servants.

Taxation, based on land and people, was important for the smooth running of the administration and military, and the hard work was carried out by conductores who would either be employed as an independent, in which case they would take a slice of the money they gathered, or placed on the payroll as an employee. Every five years conductores would also undertake the census, which was supervised by the Roman censor: effectively a magistrate appointed from the army who would also supervise public morality.

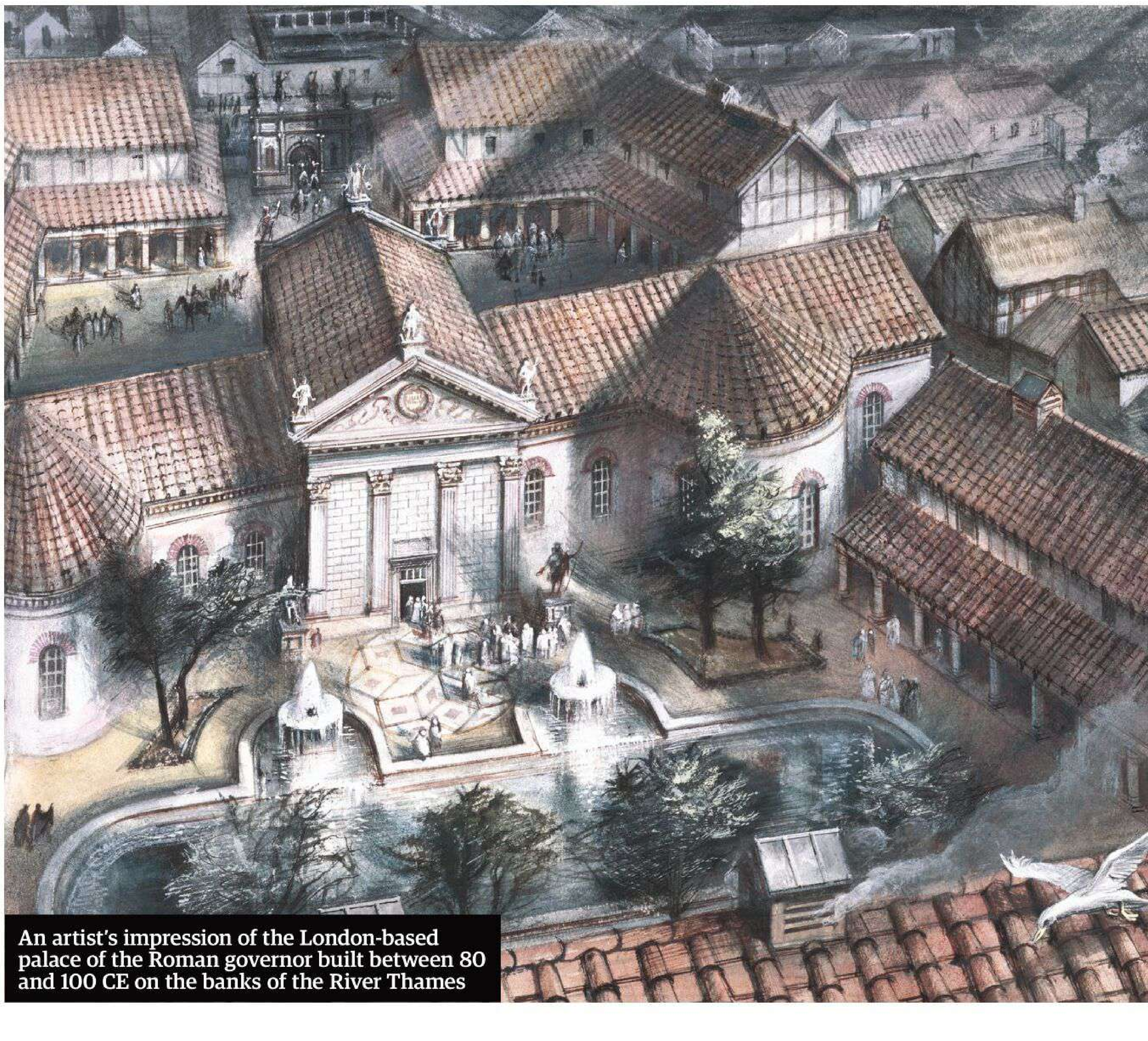
In all cases, the Romans were always careful to govern their provinces fairly so as to avoid unrest, although they would surround themselves by friends, clients, ex-slaves and sometimes the sons of their friends back home. The fact that there were always three or four legions based in Britannia is proof that peace was never guaranteed. Troops under the rule of a commander, answerable to the governor, would be called upon to police the formal towns the Romans created and evolved but, that being said, it was also a time of great growth.

Britannia's rulers were largely left to get on with their task so long as the taxes they owed arrived on time and there were few revolts. According to Professor Greg Woolf, the director of the Institute of Classical Studies at the University of London, they had a lot of freedom because Britain was so far away from Rome.

Getting around Britannia itself was easier thanks to roads between the towns, making governing the province more manageable. By ordering troops specialised in civil engineering to develop towns – each based on a grid system with new buildings – urban areas also became more attractive. This too made governing less complex since it was easier to collect taxes from urban areas. That said, there were different administrative approaches depending on the kind of community involved.

Colonia towns, for example, followed Roman laws to the letter, and they were hailed as an example that others ought to follow (such towns included Colchester, Lincoln and Gloucester). Municipia towns and civitas, meanwhile, followed native laws in tandem with those of Rome (Verulamium was a prime example of a municipium, situated southwest of what is today St Albans in Hertfordshire).

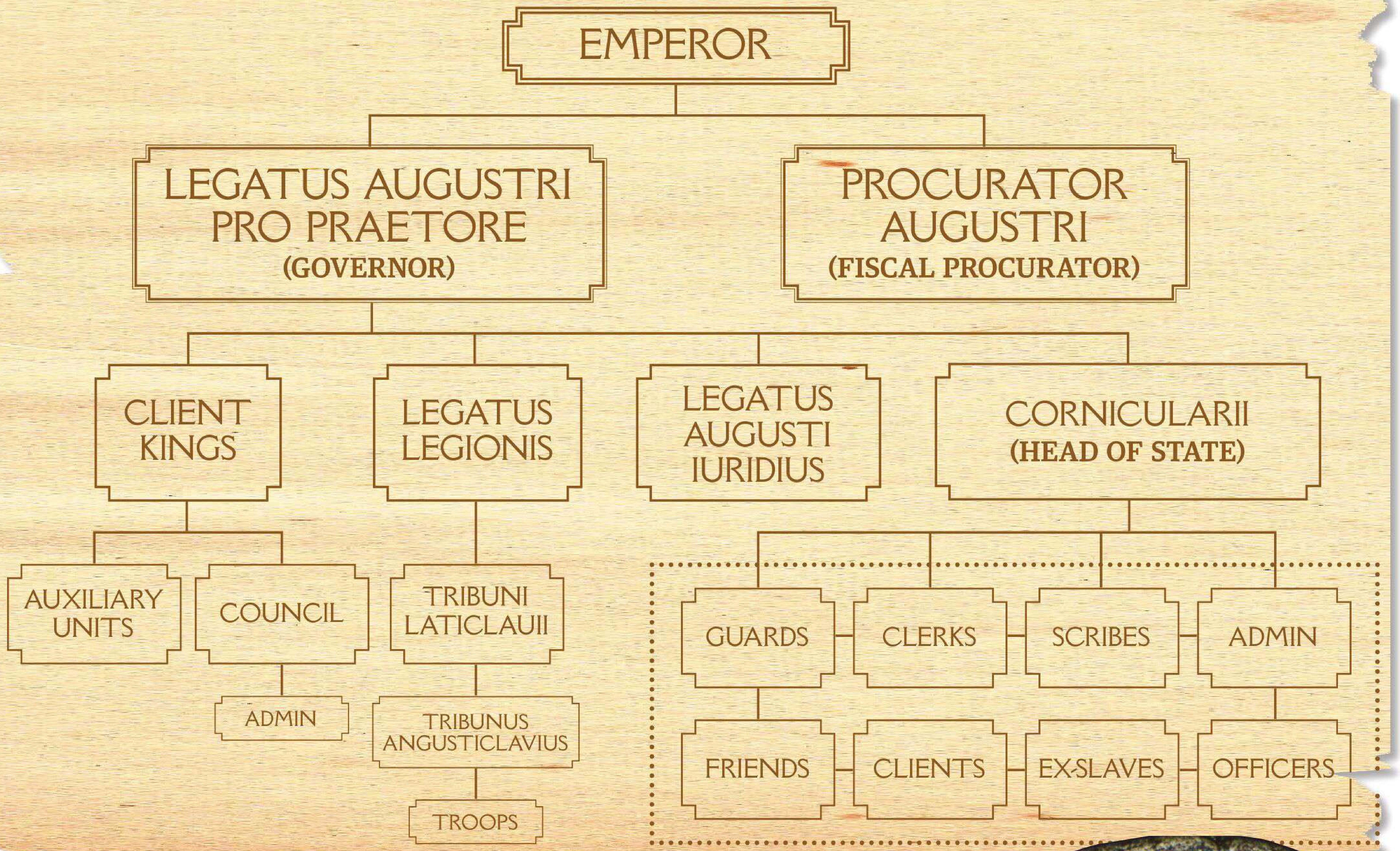
Emperor Hadrian visited Britain in 122 CE



An artist's impression of the London-based palace of the Roman governor built between 80 and 100 CE on the banks of the River Thames

CHAIN OF COMMAND

The chain of command in Roman Britain was personal, rather messy and ever-changing, but there was a loose structure of sorts


EMPEROR
LEGATUS AUGUSTRI PRO PRAETORE (GOVERNOR)
PROCURATOR AUGUSTRI (FISCAL PROCURATOR)
CLIENT KINGS
LEGATUS LEGIONIS
LEGATUS AUGUSTI IURIDIUS
CORNICULARII (HEAD OF STATE)
AUXILIARY UNITS
COUNCIL
ADMIN
TRIBUNI LATICLAUII
TRIBUNUS ANGUSTICLAVIUS
TROOPS
GUARDS
CLERKS
SCRIBES
ADMIN
FRIENDS
CLIENTS
EX-SLAVES
OFFICERS

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To aid them in their tasks governors would be supported by a personal secretary of sorts called a quaestor, and they also had numerous clerks and slaves who would look after many different tasks such as dealing with requests, assisting in court, clearing matters of law and dealing with correspondence. There were many other administrative roles too, all of which would be administered by procurators. It ensured the smooth running of a country once marred by catastrophic tribal in-fighting.

Certainly, lots of jobs needed to be carried out, such as looking after the mint or the grain supply (Britannia was rich in grain, which was one of its attractions along with metals, and centurions were often put in charge of escorting cargoes). Woolf says centurions also acted like the district officers who worked in British India many centuries later.

Even so, things didn't remain the same forever. There were numerous tweaks, especially when Britannia was split into two. At this stage there were two governors: one in the north (an area referred to as Inferior) and another in the south (an area referred to as Superior). The northern governor was also the legate of the VI legion at Eboracum (modern-day York), but even this arrangement was not to last.

A further split into four provinces caused yet another restructure. Maxima Caesariensis came to be governed by a senatorial consularis since it was the most important, while the rest had governors of equestrian rank. There was also a deputy of Britannia called the vicarius, although the emperor retained overall control, while local government remained in place.

As a model it took some beating for the time, and it proved highly effective not just in Roman Britain but for many provinces under the rule of Rome. Delegating authority through a hierarchy of officials with the assistance of tribal leaders provided a stamp of authority and fostered loyalty. By the time the Romans left Britannia many inhabitants viewed themselves as Roman, and the structure was a sound bedrock for decades to come.

S
BRITANNIA

Britannia depicted on the reverse of a Roman coin

FISHBOURNE ROMAN PALACE

Believed to have been the royal seat of the client king Cogidubnus, who had been leader of the Regnenses in pre-Roman Britain, Fishbourne Roman Palace had an interesting history. One of the earliest official structures built in Britain, it became home to many mosaics – for which it is now perhaps best known – before burning down in the 3rd century CE. Visitors to the site today can see the mosaics, like the one pictured, as well as marvel at the size the palace once was and walk round a re-creation of Britain's first ever private garden.

© Alamy

FROM CELTS TO CITIZENS

Discover how citizenship was used as a tool to bring Britannia under Roman control

Written by Scott Reeves

The four legions sent by Claudius to conquer Britain were the cream of Roman society. The 20,000 legionaries were all citizens, many of whom were born in Italy or even Rome itself, and it was their duty to follow the wishes of the emperor and claim the island on the northwest fringe of the empire. Accompanying them was an equal number of auxiliary soldiers, free men of the empire who were not citizens but fought for the promise to become one when they retired.

Yet this was not a simple smash-and-grab war of conquest against the Celtic tribes who called Britain home - the Roman Empire used a subtle process of assimilation that aimed to transform the native Britons into loyal Romans themselves. Chief among the methods used to transform the patchwork of tribal lands and kingdoms into the province of Britannia was the potential of Roman citizenship being awarded to its residents, making them equal to the legionaries who fought them.

The privilege of citizenship was already an ancient institution when the Roman army crossed the Channel in 43 CE. Initially restricted to the freeborn of Rome, then to those of the wider Italian Peninsula, citizenship granted several rights: the ability to vote, stand for office, own property and benefit from legal protections.

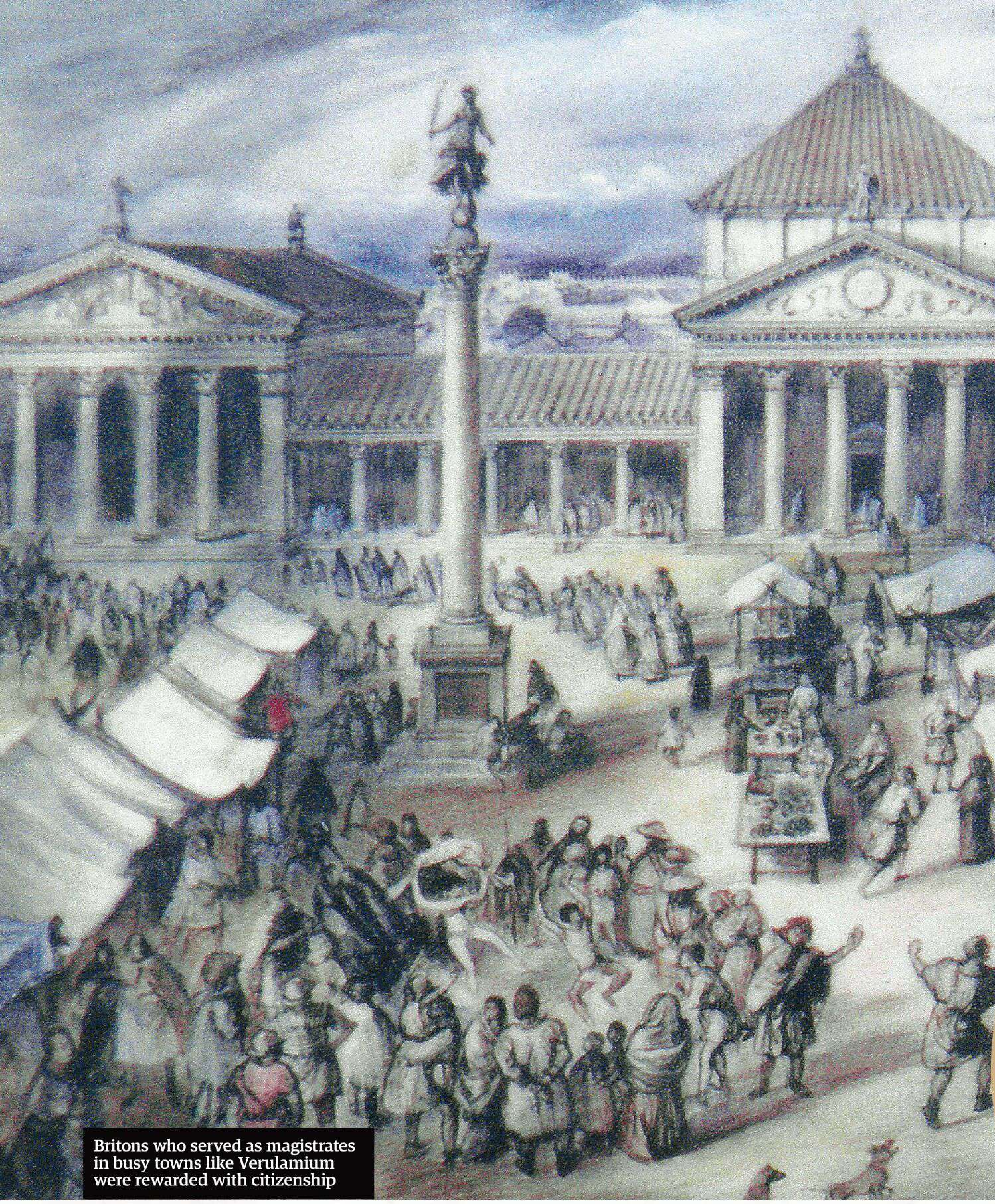
In order to bring Britannia firmly under imperial control, city colonies were established in which citizens - typically retired soldiers who had reached the end of their term of service - were granted land. This established a base of citizens in the conquered province who could be called upon in an emergency, but it also planted a settlement of Latin speakers who lived under Roman laws and customs. The first British colonia, Camulodunum (modern Colchester) was established in 49 CE when the legionary base there was dismantled. Two more coloniae followed in the 1st century: Lindum (Lincoln) in 71 and Glevum (Gloucester) in 97.

However, in the first years of post-conquest Britannia the citizens in the coloniae numbered only a small proportion of the population - there were perhaps 50,000 citizens in 100 CE, less than three per cent of the total population. The vast majority of the rest were peregrini,

Caracalla, the emperor who unwittingly began the empire's decline by extending citizenship to all freeborn subjects

HADRIANVS AVG COS III PP
BRITANNIA
SC

A 1st-century coin from Emperor Hadrian's reign commemorates the assimilation of Britain by showing Britannia on the reverse



Britons who served as magistrates in busy towns like Verulamium were rewarded with citizenship

Citizenship could be granted as a special reward to loyal Britons such as Togidubnus, who built the stunning palace at Fishbourne

the Roman term for a free, non-citizen imperial subject. Some lived in old Celtic settlements, which continued under Roman rule: Calleva Atrebatum (Silchester) was originally the capital of the Atrebates, while Noviomagus Reginorum (Chichester) was home to the Regni. Others lived in small market towns and rural villages.

The peregrini tended to live under the control of a civitas, a largely autonomous local government often ruled by the old Celtic tribal elites. Although the Roman provincial governor could intercede in their internal affairs, civitates were allowed to retain their customary laws as long as they paid the taxes due to Rome and maintained the roads that ran across their land.

The full integration of the peregrini into Roman culture occurred slowly. Loyal tribal rulers were granted citizenship as a reward for keeping their territories submissive and loyal to Rome. Togidubnus, king of the Regni, was probably awarded citizenship due to his peaceful submission to the Claudian invaders in 43 CE – that he was able to begin the vast villa complex at Fishbourne indicates that he benefited greatly from his new overlords. Residents of municipal towns like Verulamium (St Albans) who served as magistrates were also granted citizenship after their terms of office were completed. British men who chose to join the ranks of the Roman army would serve in auxiliary units with the promise of citizenship being granted when they eventually retired, while the children of retired soldiers who married native British wives would also inherit citizenship.

As time went on more and more peregrini were elevated to the ranks of the citizenship: by inheritance, through retirement after military or civic service, or as the result of an exceptional award. In 212, the Edict of Caracalla declared that any remaining free men would henceforth be granted citizenship. However, Emperor Caracalla unwittingly sowed the seeds of the empire's decline by removing one of the primary reasons for non-citizens to join the army – the promise of citizenship on retirement. From then on the army struggled to fill its ranks and fight the barbarians outside its borders.

The Edict of Caracalla had no effect on the position of two different groups who were barred from full citizenship both before and after it was pronounced. Women continued to be the inferior sex – although they could be citizens, they were disqualified from key privileges that male citizens had, namely the right to vote and to hold office. However, freeborn women still held a more enviable position than those at the other end of the social spectrum: slaves. Considered property under Roman law, slaves had few legal rights. Unlike citizens, they could be subjected to corporal punishment, torture and summary execution. However, those who were lucky enough to be freed by their masters could rise in status, even on occasion reaching the heights of full citizenship.

The desire for social promotion across all levels of society meant that citizenship was a vital tool in the Romanisation of Britain. Sword and shield may have conquered the land of Britannia, but it was the promise of citizenship that transformed its people from the troublesome Celts into relatively loyal Roman Britons.

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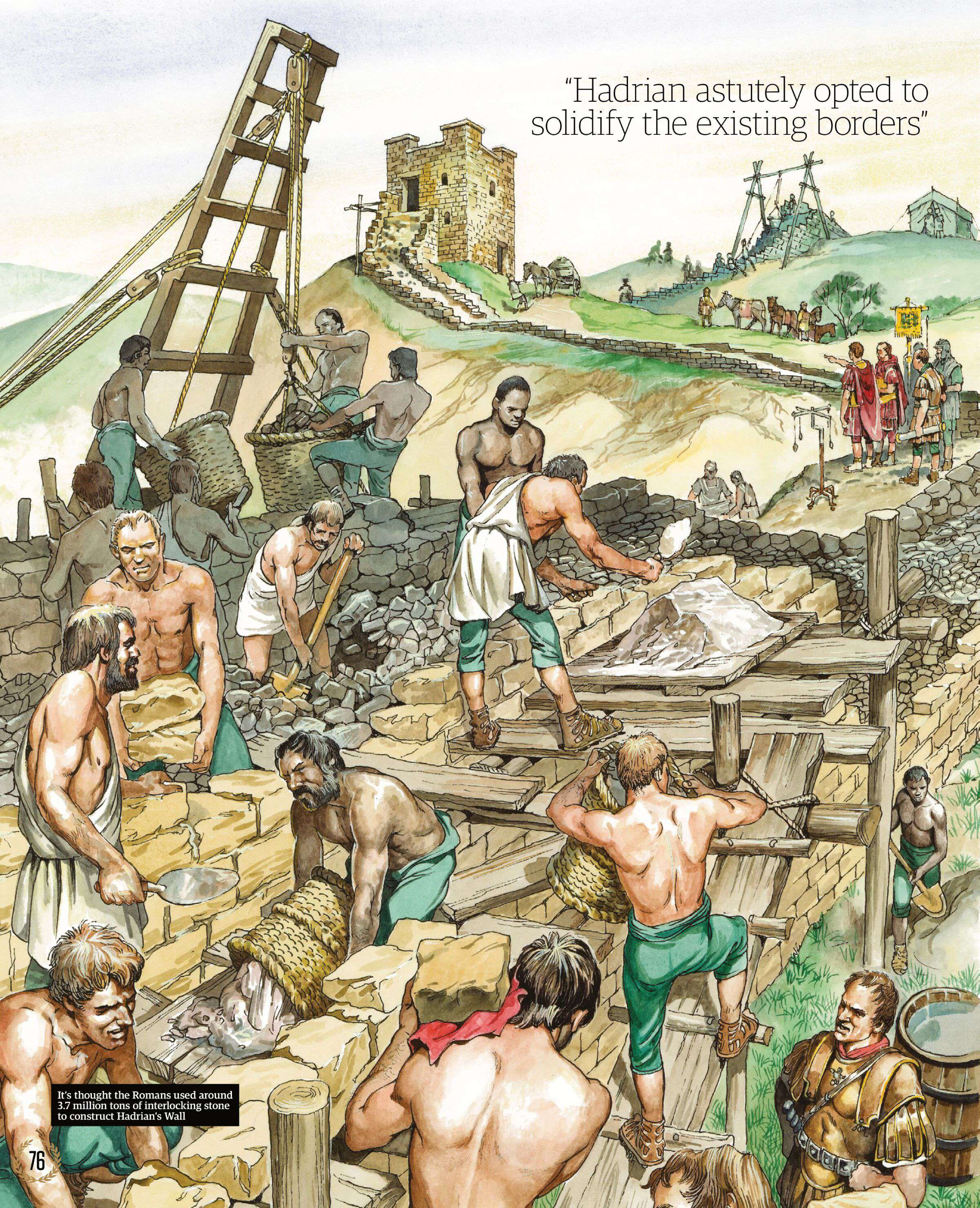
“Hadrian astutely opted to solidify the existing borders”



It's thought the Romans used around 3.7 million tons of interlocking stone to construct Hadrian's Wall

THE WALL IN THE NORTH

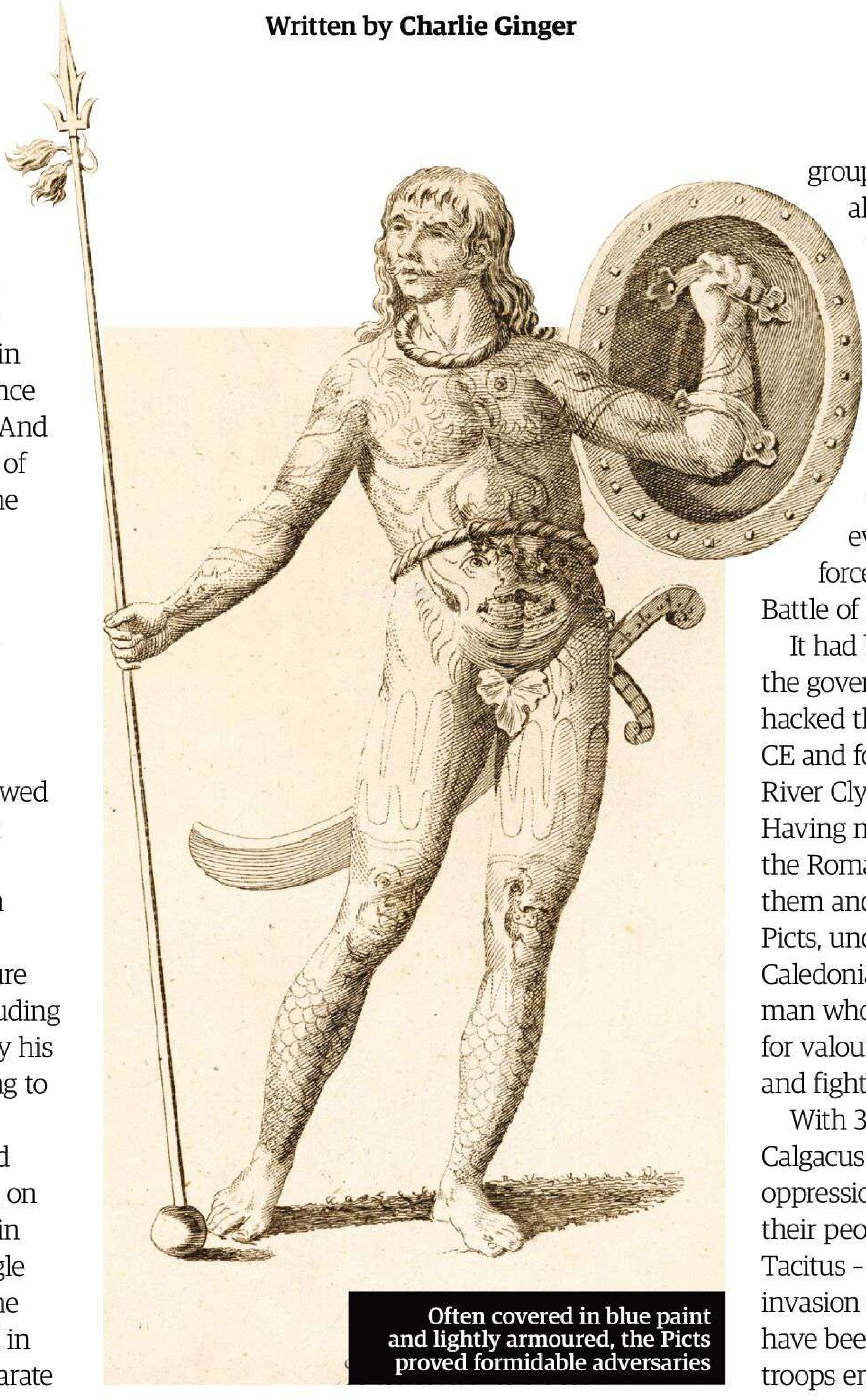
When it came to keeping barbarians out of his empire, Hadrian was not afraid to resort to more permanent means

Written by **Charlie Ginger**

When Hadrian became emperor in 117 CE, he did so at a time when the Roman Empire was at its peak, his predecessor Trajan having expanded the sphere of Roman rule to encompass Hispania in the west to Babylonia in the east, and from Egypt in the south to the once fabled lands beyond the waters north of Gaul. And while rebellions flared in many far-flung parts of Hadrian's new realm, it was to the north that he would quickly turn his attention.

The windswept wilds of northern Britannia had largely been brought under control by the time of Hadrian's rise to power, but as with any part of the empire's borderlands, peace and the acknowledgement of the presence of Roman-installed lines of demarcation were never guaranteed. Aware that Trajan had in fact bestowed an empire stretched beyond its means, Hadrian astutely opted to solidify the existing borders, shunning the temptation to embark on his own campaign of glorious (if also eye-wateringly expensive) conquest. He could not hope to secure his empire and protect his subjects while marauding barbarians continued to raid his lands and harry his soldiers. One adversary in particular was proving to be extremely troublesome: the Picts.

These ferocious warriors of northern Scotland (whose name means 'the painted ones' in Latin on account of their habit for smearing themselves in blue dyes before battle) did not constitute a single tribe or people, but more of a 'confederacy' in the words of historians. Thought to have originated in the icy lands of Scythia (Scandinavia), this disparate group of many tongues, tattoos and tribal alliances was united by a common hatred of the Romans.

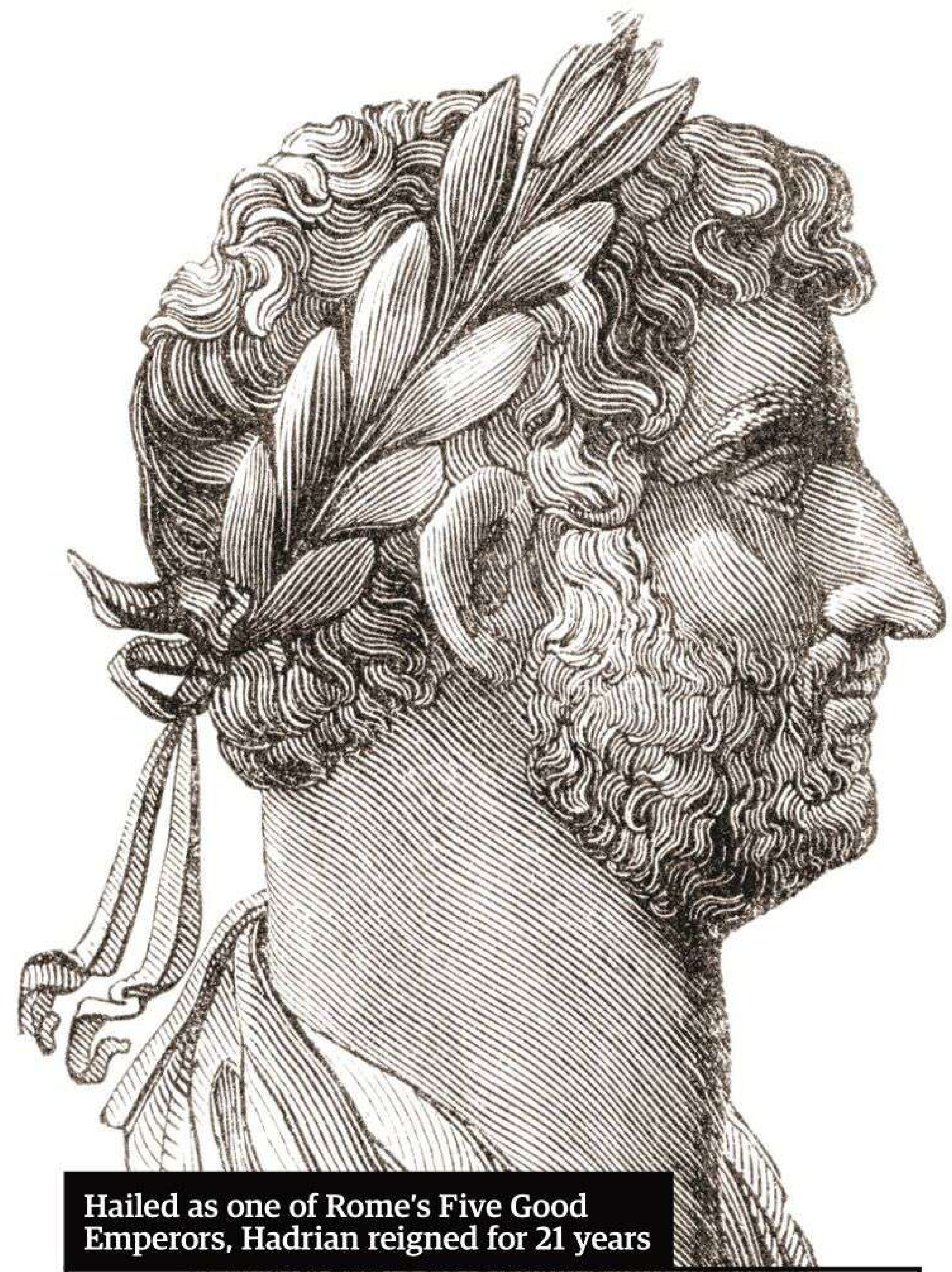


Often covered in blue paint and lightly armoured, the Picts proved formidable adversaries

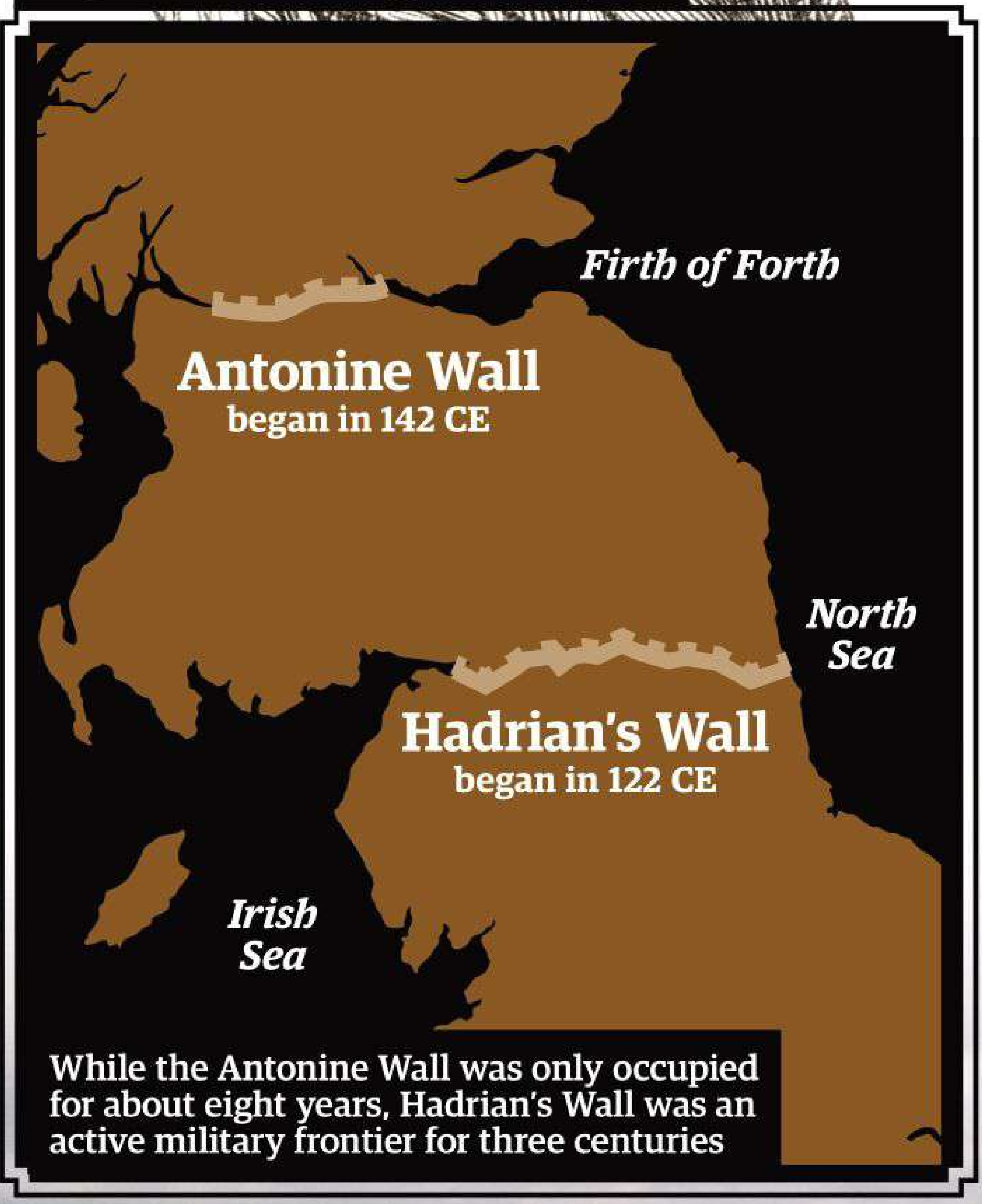
Having been permitted to live in relative peace by the Romans' preoccupation with settling the rest of the province of Britannia, the Picts (often wrongly smeared as salivating savages bent on resisting the march of progress at every turn, despite a wealth of archaeological evidence pointing to the contrary) were forced to confront the inevitable in 83 CE at the Battle of Mons Graupius.

It had been under the leadership of Julius Agricola, the governor of Britannia, that Roman legions had hacked their way north into Scotland in 79 or 80 CE and forged ahead to a boundary north of the River Clyde (which runs into modern-day Glasgow). Having met little in the way of significant resistance, the Romans seemed destined to sweep all before them and head even further north. However, the Picts, under the command of Calgacus, the first Caledonian to be noted in any historical text and a man who Tacitus hailed as "the most distinguished for valour among the chieftains" decided to stand and fight.

With 30,000 blue-tanned fighters at his back, Calgacus harangued them with tales of Roman oppression and the need to sacrifice themselves for their people's freedom (all of which is according to Tacitus – the only historian who charted the Roman invasion of Scotland). While the Romans are said to have been evenly matched in numbers, only 11,000 troops engaged the northern horde, cutting them



Hailed as one of Rome's Five Good Emperors, Hadrian reigned for 21 years



While the Antonine Wall was only occupied for about eight years, Hadrian's Wall was an active military frontier for three centuries

down in droves as the disorganised natives smashed into the impenetrable Roman ranks of shield and steel. While claims that Agricola's men scythed down as many as 11,000 Picts are believed to have been exaggerated, the Picts did indeed suffer many losses, even if they did manage to withdraw into the forbidding forests and hills that they called home.

Reverting back to their preferred method of guerilla warfare would serve the Picts far better in the ensuing years, to such an extent that by the time Hadrian became emperor, they were deemed a severe enough threat to warrant the construction of a permanent barrier that would separate the province from the 'barbarians' on the other side.

It's highly likely that the concept of the wall had been planned and agreed upon prior to Hadrian's visit to the northern reaches of his empire in 122 CE, but the sight of the barren lands that stretched beyond the Roman positions only cemented the emperor in his belief that the need to protect his territories was an imperative of "divine instruction". Yet the threat of raiding Picts was not the only reason behind committing to such a mammoth undertaking, for the wall would, once completed, enable the Romans to better control migration, trade and smugglers. This in turn would enable the Romans to impose an effective method of taxation and ensure that unwanted goods could be confiscated. As an added benefit, the wall would be a physical projection of Roman might, one that couldn't fail to intimidate would-be rebels.

The construction of a wall that would span a nation and be tall and wide enough to rebuff enemy assaults required a vast amount of manpower and materials. The former would be provided by three legions of the Roman army stationed in Britannia, with each legion comprising 5,000 men, while the materials varied between squared stone (used for the section of the wall located to the east of the River Irthing) and turf (although this less robust section was later rebuilt using stone).

The plans for the wall changed even as building was underway, with sections of completed wall demolished and rebuilt to incorporate new fortifications at intervals of seven miles. Milecastles were also built into the wall at every mile, and further protection was provided by two stone towers located between each milecastle, the observation platforms of which were reached by a staircase (possibly a ladder in places). A complex array of double portal gates punctuated the wall at these fortified locations and permitted the swift manoeuvring of troops north of the wall in an emergency. A vast ditch known as the Vallum was excavated south of the wall wherever nature had not provided its own barriers, its two steep banks separated by a steep ditch that would offer yet another hurdle to any tribes foolhardy enough to attempt to breach the Roman defences.

It took 15,000 troops approximately six years to finish Hadrian's most famous project. By the time the wall was completed, it stretched 117 kilometres (73 miles) across and stood at varying heights of 3.5 to six metres (11.5 to 20 feet) high and three to six metres (10 to 20 feet) wide, with the strategically vital central section measuring 2.4 metres (7.9 feet) wide and three metres (10 feet) high. White washed and bristling with 80 milecastles, around 160 towers and 17 main forts, it presented an imposing obstacle, yet one that was anything but unbreachable.

Considering the sheer amount of labour, materials and time dedicated to the raising of Hadrian's Wall, the fact that it was abandoned just 25 years after its completion is incredible, but in around 153 CE (25 years after the end of Hadrian's rule) Emperor Antoninus Pius – Hadrian's adopted son and

The wall is particularly well preserved on the slopes of Whin Sill, a location in which the Romans cleverly incorporated natural rock formations into their new defensive positions

LIFE ON THE WALL

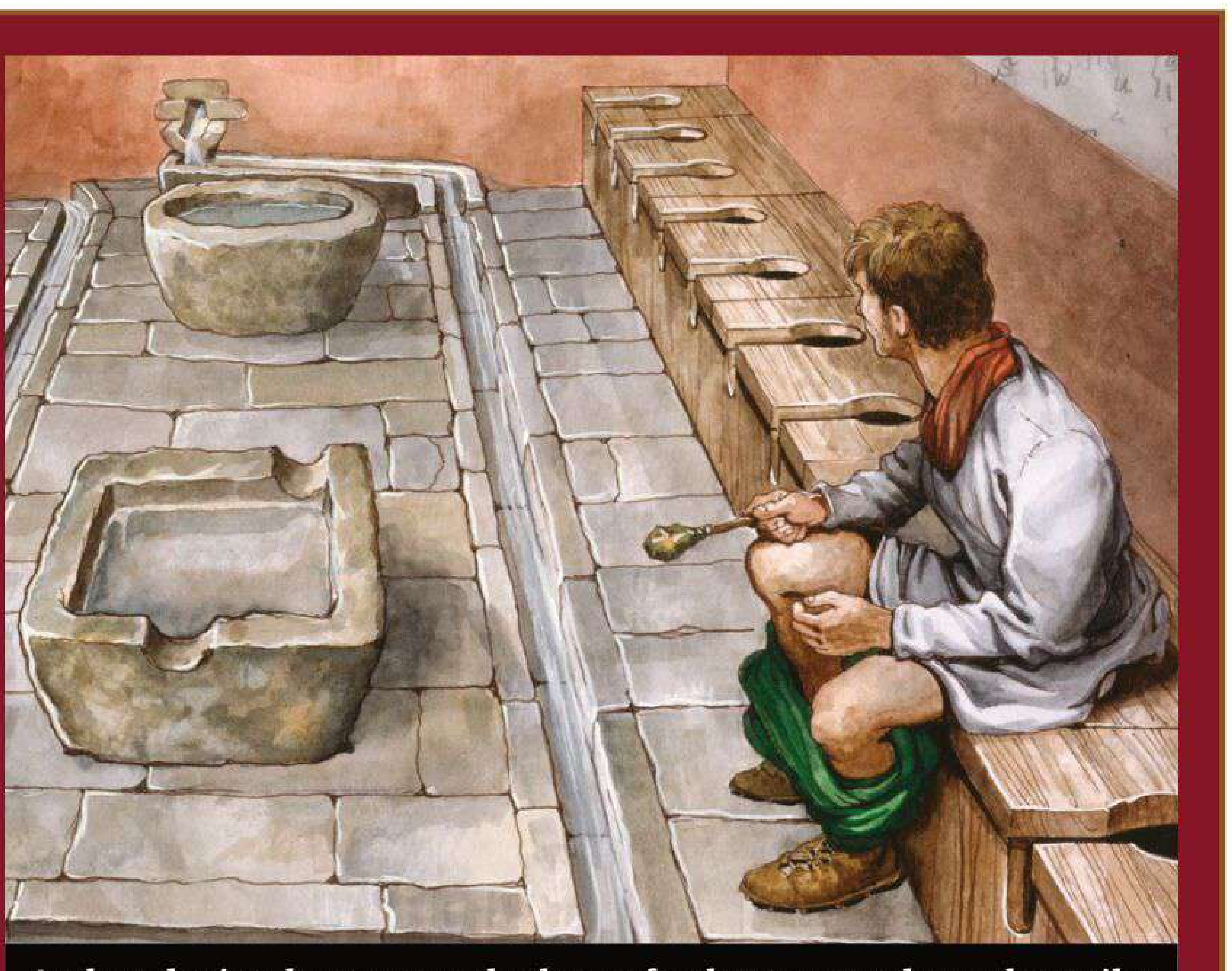
Evidence suggests a posting to Hadrian's Wall wasn't quite as bad as it sounds

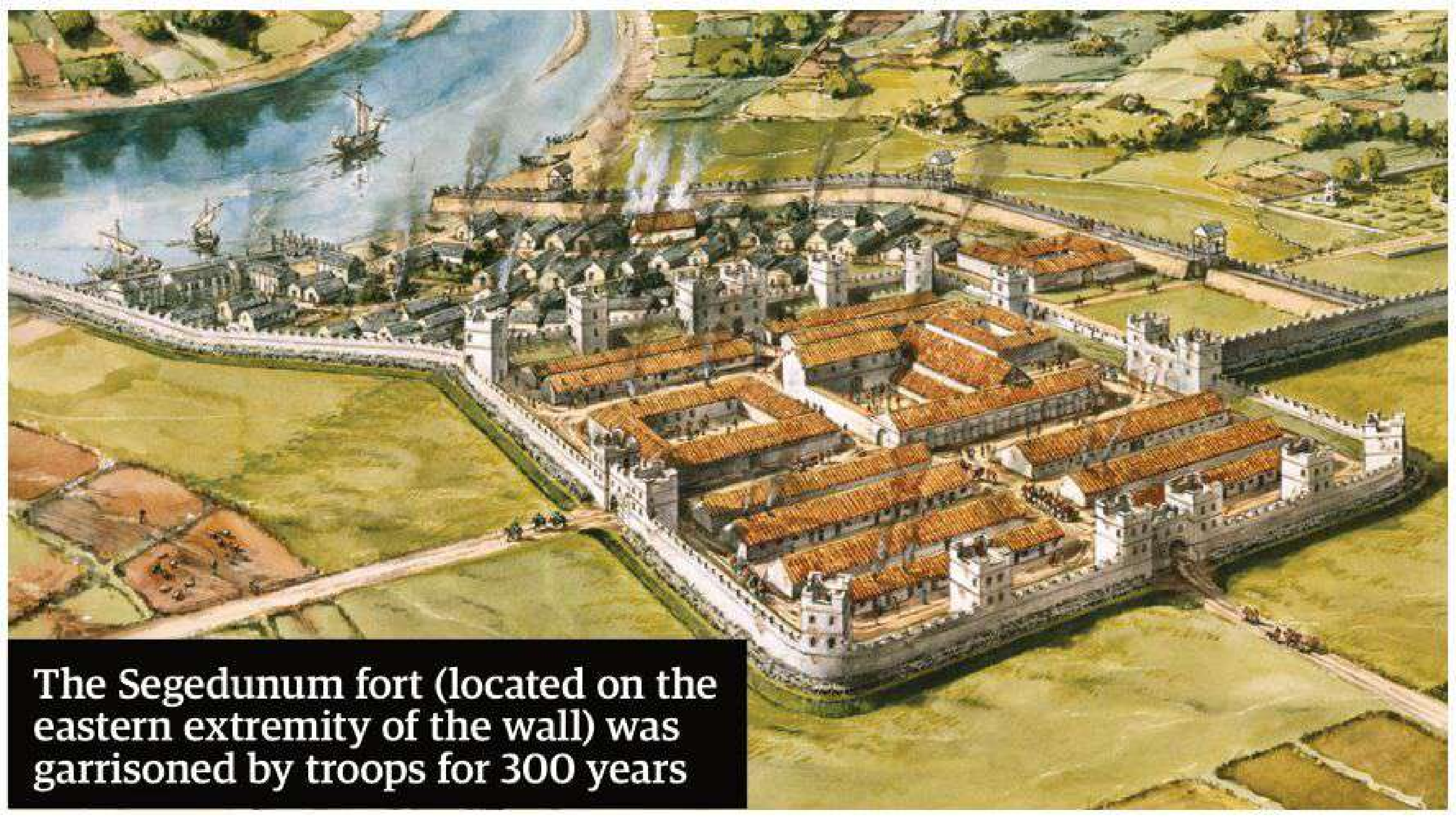
A posting to the Roman Empire's most northern boundary (and thereby its coldest) doesn't sound like it would have been an appealing placement – and that's before the threat of marauding Picts comes into consideration. However, archaeological evidence has revealed the auxiliary troops stationed on Hadrian's Wall enjoyed the many benefits of cutting-edge Roman technology.

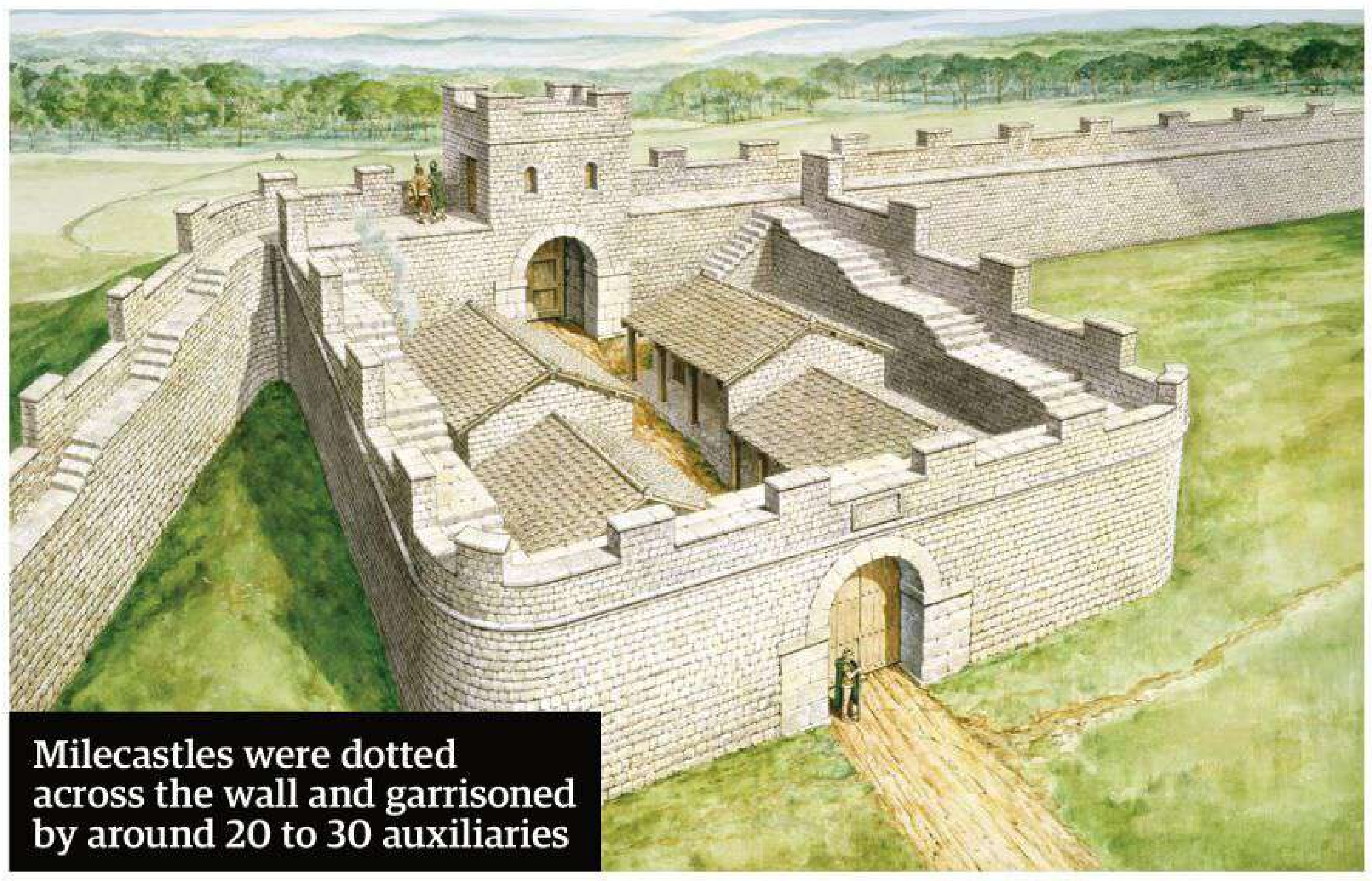
One of the perks some men had access to was the hypocaust, an elaborate system of under-floor heating that must have proved popular in the harsh winters of northern Britannia (as were the leggings and sheepskin boots that soldiers donned in the colder months). Flushing toilets – something we take for granted today but were rare at the time – were also built into the forts and milecastles that the troops garrisoned.

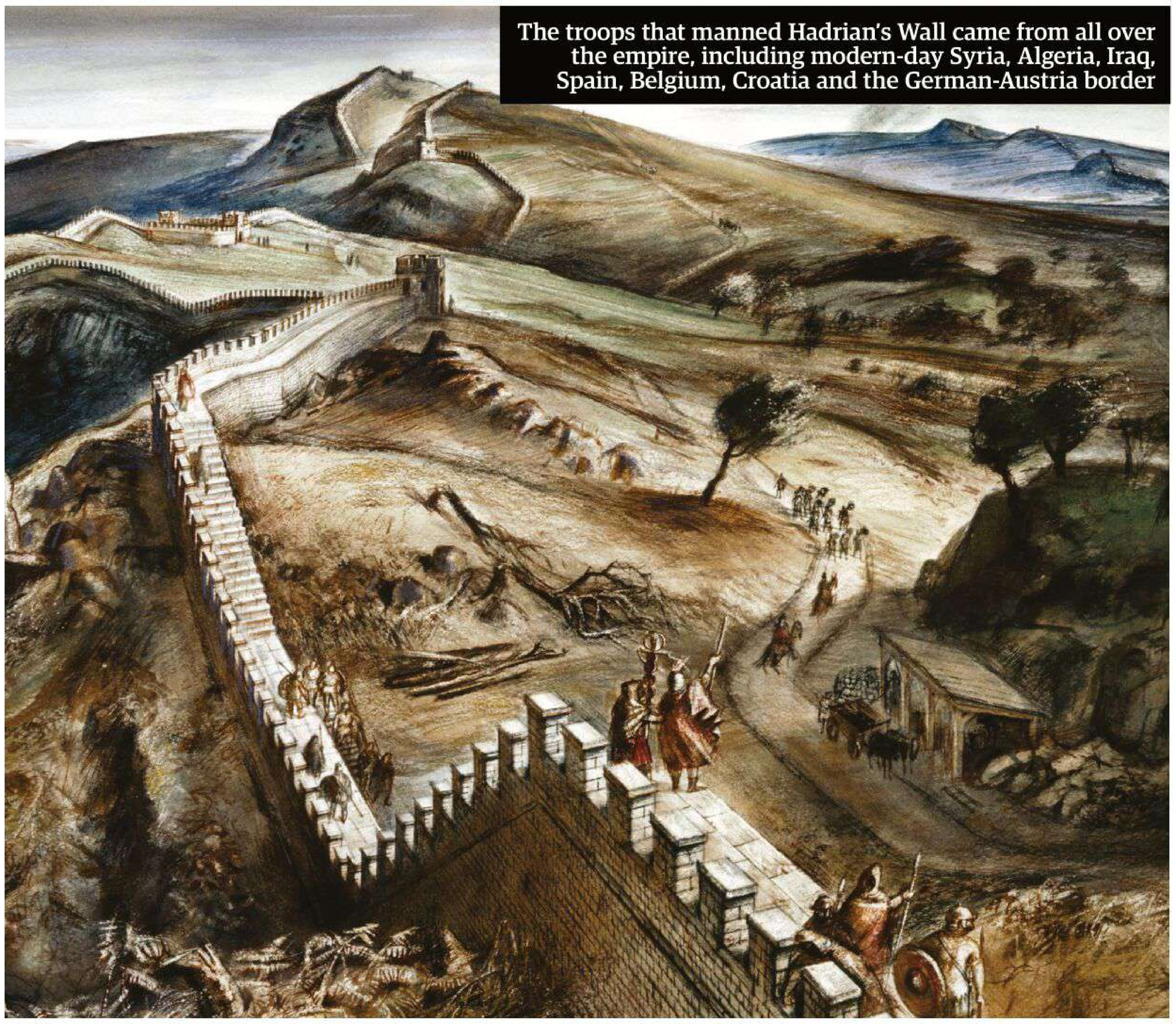
When they weren't on duty, the soldiers would have been able to venture into nearby camps and villages that sprang up around the wall; places that offered both local goods and treasures shipped in from around the empire. Yet arguably the greatest pleasure afforded to the men on the wall would have been the presence of their wives and children.

Although soldiers were forbidden to marry (a rule lifted in 197 CE), it was often the case that this restriction was ignored, something that the finding of both a woman and child's bones and an infant's feeding bottle within the confines of a cemetery at one of the wall's forts seems to prove.


Archaeologists have unearthed a perfectly preserved wooden toilet seat from a trench near to the wall. Their next aim is to dig up the famous Roman spongia (seen here in the hands of the men using the latrine)


The Segedunum fort (located on the eastern extremity of the wall) was garrisoned by troops for 300 years


Milecastles were dotted across the wall and garrisoned by around 20 to 30 auxiliaries


The troops that manned Hadrian's Wall came from all over the empire, including modern-day Syria, Algeria, Iraq, Spain, Belgium, Croatia and the German-Austria border

successor – interrupted a period of relative peace by ordering that his armies push further north into Scotland and called for the erection of a timber and turf wall that became known as the Antonine Wall. However, this structure was also abandoned in 162 CE (a mere eight years after its completion), as the Romans fell back to Hadrian's Wall once more. It wasn't long before they would yet again have to face the threat of the Picts.

The first major uprising came in 296 CE when the Caledonian and Maetae tribes surged south and savaged the Roman fort at Chester. While this rebellion was finally crushed in 306 CE, the Picts were back 36 years later with a full-scale assault on a series of forts north of Hadrian's Wall, then a string of attacks in 360, 365 and 367 CE that saw the diminishing influence of Rome all but vanish from the north as hordes of native warriors swarmed into Britannia. It was only in 381/382 CE that an expedition directed by Magnus Maximus (a future emperor) put a final stop to Picts incursions and restored order.

By this point, Rome's presence in the province was rapidly dwindling, and as increasing numbers of troops were called back to the continent to help extinguish uprisings elsewhere in the empire, Hadrian's Wall began to fall into ruin, no longer repaired or improved as it was by the men who stalked it. Yet it still provided a strategic line of defence for some time after the beginning of Rome's withdrawal from Britannia, and records suggest that sections of it were occupied in the 5th century, although it was increasingly garrisoned by locals as opposed to Rome's auxiliary soldiers.

Without troops to watch over it, the wall was at the mercy of locals, who began to strip it of stone to be used in the construction of nearby buildings. This repurposing happened at such a rate that today 90 per cent of the wall can no longer be seen. Even so, what remains is still an awe-inspiring testament to the reach and power of the Roman Empire. Designated a UNESCO Word Heritage Site in 1987 and thereby shielded from further damage, Hadrian's Wall still stands proud in numerous places, its stony arms branching out over a 48-kilometre (30-mile) stretch from Birdoswald in Cumbria to the village of Chollerford in Northumberland, remnants of a time when Roman might was at its greatest.

© Alamy, Getty Images

INTRODUCING THE PICTS

Meet the Romans' northern neighbours and discover how they clashed over the border

Written by **Benjamin Hudson**

Hadrian's Wall facing east towards Crag Lough

The Picts inhabited northern Britain, a region that the Romans always regarded as menacing. That area was north of a line running from (to use modern names) the Solway Firth across to the mouth of the River Tyne, a region that was never permanently subdued by the imperial forces. Roman operations there began a generation after the successful Claudian invasion of the island; expeditions were repeatedly sent north and led by experienced commanders such as the famous Agricola. Manpower was supplemented by physical structures when Hadrian's Wall was built between 122 and 128 CE.

Another wall/earthen work barrier was built further north known as the Antonine Wall, which was manned only occasionally. After the 3rd century, the imperial border was once again marked by Hadrian's Wall.

Initially, the Romans used 'Briton' as a general term for the inhabitants of the northern regions, who would later be described as 'Picts'. Writing in the 3rd century in connection with the expedition of Emperor Septimius Severus, the historian Cassius Dio noted that the Britons beyond Hadrian's Wall were divided into two large confederations called the Maeatae, who lived next to the wall, and the Caledonians, who lived beyond them. He also noted that there were many individual tribes within those larger collectives. Despite the troops at his command, Severus was constantly outmanoeuvred and his opponents refused to give him the satisfaction of a set battle. Using livestock as bait, the Britons lured the Romans into swamps, where they either drowned or couldn't fight.

Concerning their customs, Dio notes that the Britons outside the empire were fierce, had wives and children in common and did not wear clothes other than iron bands. His comments were expanded by another contemporary named Herodian, who explains that iron was a precious metal among those people and that they refused to wear clothes in order to display the designs and images of animals on their bodies,

The body art explains the name 'Pict', which was used circa 296 when a schoolmaster of Gaul named Eumenius wrote a poem in praise of Constantius Chlorus, one of the empire's Augusti who had successfully put down a rebellion in Britain. The victory was made easier, according to Eumenius, because the Britons practised war only on barbarians such as the Picts. A decade later, Constantius led another expedition in Britain; this time verses declare that his success in the swamps and forests of the Caledonians and other Picts were the least of his accomplishments. When Constantius died at York in 306, the command was taken by his famous son Constantine, later known as 'the Great.' In both sets of verses the name 'Pict' is clearly derogatory and likely reflects a slang term used by the soldiers, echoing the association of body art with savagery.

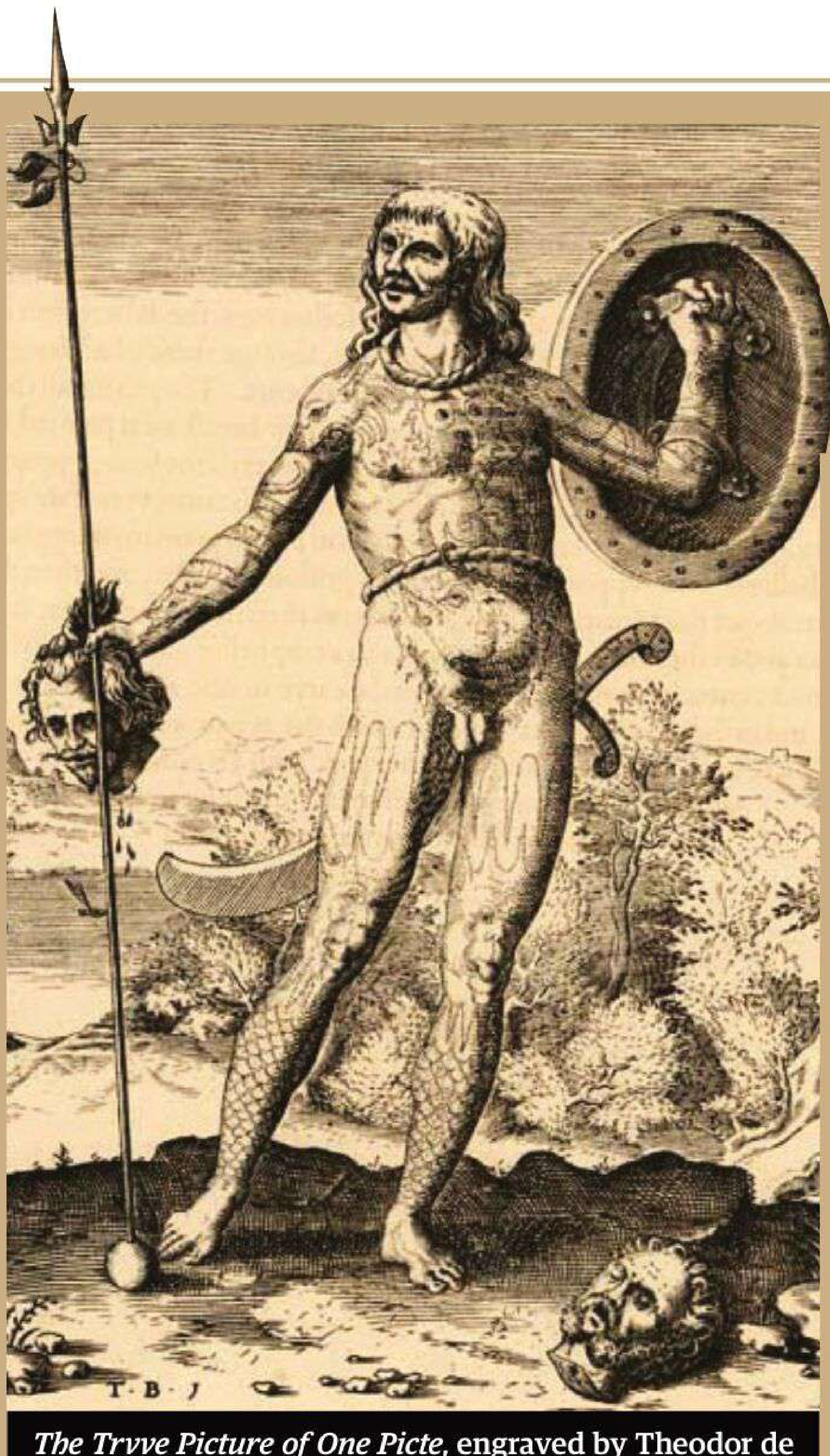
By the middle of the 4th century, the Picts were becoming much more militarily active. Much of what we know comes from a contemporary

THE PAINTED MEN

Uncover the story of the Picts' tattoos

The name Pict comes from the Latin 'pictus', meaning 'painted one'. The name probably was slang used by Roman soldiers (who equated body art with savagery) for the Britons living outside the empire. Were the Picts practising actual tattooing or was it merely body painting? In the 5th century, during the reign of Emperor Honorius, the poet Claudian describes the "painted life" flowing out of a Pict.

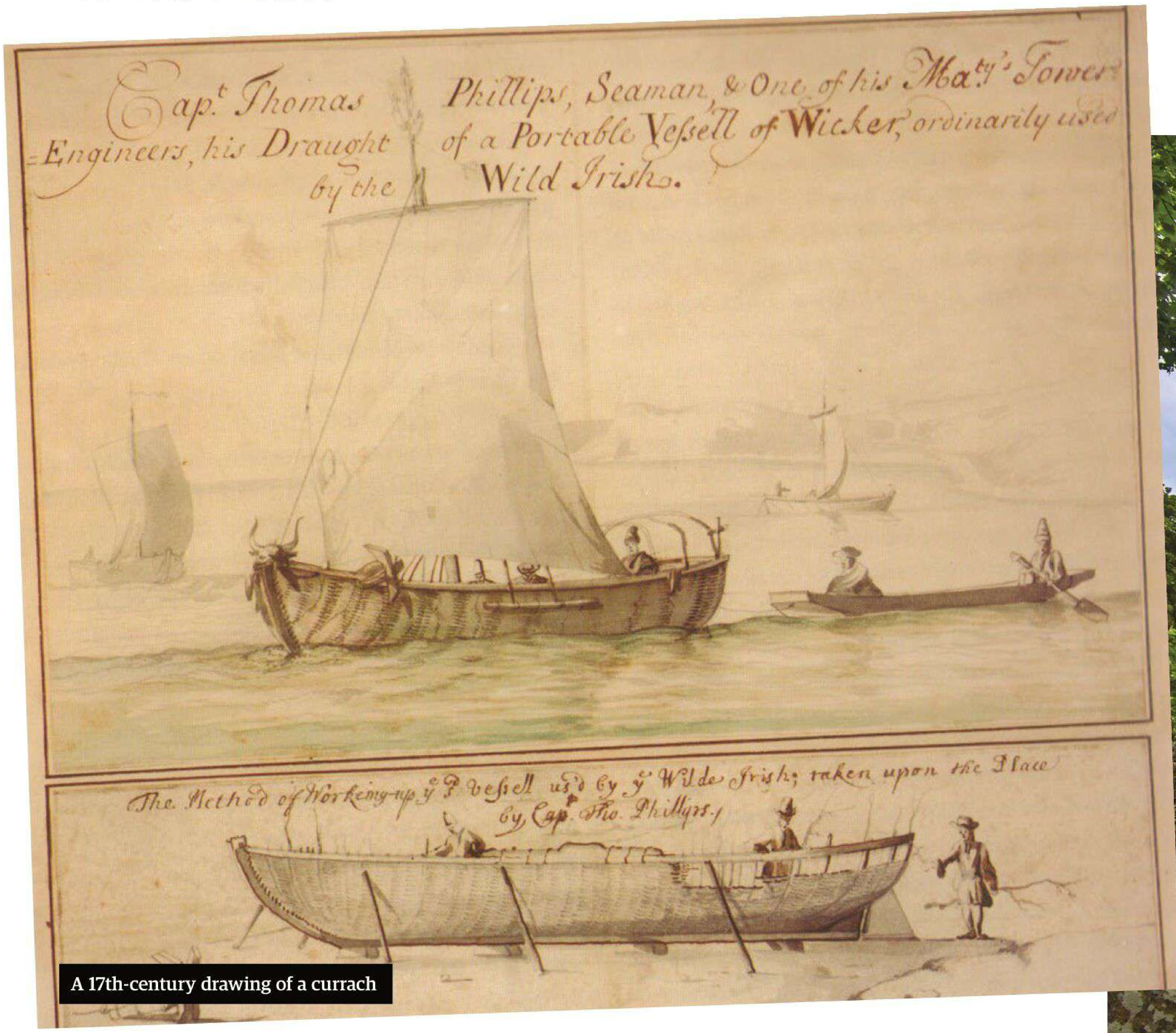
According to a Spanish bishop name Isidore, writing a century and a quarter later, they did tattoo. In his *Etymologies*, in a discussion of the characteristics of peoples, he says that the name 'Pict' refers to their bodies, where an artisan with the tiny point of a pin made scars to serve as identifying marks in the flesh. The scars were then coloured by the juice squeezed from a native plant, and the nobility were distinguished by their tattooed limbs. The juice to which Isidore refers is probably woad, a native British plant with a strong and unpleasant smell whose bluish colour was remarked upon by Julius Caesar. This has led to centuries of speculations on the results.



The Trvve Picture of One Picte, engraved by Theodor de Bry and published in Thomas Hariot's *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*

> "Severus was constantly outmanoeuvred and his opponents refused to give him the satisfaction of a set battle"

Wheelhouse at Old Scatness, Shetland


Capt. Thomas Phillips, Seaman, & One of his Maty's Tower-Engineers, his Draught of a Portable Vessell of Wicker, ordinarily used by the Wild Irish.
The Method of Workeing-up ye sd Vessell us'd by ye Wilde Irish; taken upon the Place by Capt. Tho. Phillips.

A 17th-century drawing of a currach

Dun Telve broch near Glenelg in the Scottish Highlands

> "The Picts and Irish crossed into imperial territory, while the Franks attacked Gaul along the English Channel"

writer named Ammianus Marcellinus who, in the year 380, wrote a history of Rome of which the 4th-century section survives. To avoid an expensive military confrontation, the Romans attempted to control the situation through diplomacy and spies. The former included the purchasing of goodwill from powerful chieftains. This was an ancient tactic, and one interpretation of the treasure of plate and other items made of precious metals uncovered at Traprain Law in Lothian is that they were payment by imperial officials to local chieftains for peace. The eclectic and unconventional items in the hoard could have been an effort to circumvent a law enacted about 356 that forbade the melting of coins into bullion in order to send it out of the empire.

For espionage, the Roman authorities sent out spies to infiltrate people who might be plotting against Rome. According to Marcellinus, these were known as 'arcani' in Britain. Not surprisingly, exact details are scarce, but the arcani seem to have moved about as merchants or traders who gathered news as they carried out their business.

The Romans were more active in trying to prevent raids than mere bribery or spying. Even walls were of limited use, since raiders could sail around them. Writers such Gildas, in his 6th-century sermon *The Ruin of Britain*, claimed that the Picts sailed in currachs, as did their allies the Irish. According to the contemporary Roman military historian Vegetus, the Romans used a type of spy boat known as a 'Pict boat' to scout out raiding parties. These slender crafts, with a crew of 40 men, were completely blue – hull, crew uniforms, rigging and sails – so that they blended in with the sea.

Bribes, spies, boats and walls; the Roman authorities must have thought they had covered all aspects necessary to secure peace. Nevertheless, around the year 360 the Picts and the Scots began to ravage the borderlands in Britain. Emperor Julian 'the Apostate' sent his commander-in-chief Lupicinus to quell the uprising with the authority to negotiate or to use force. Lupicinus was able to negotiate a few years of peace, but conflict arose again in 364. This time, the Picts were joined by the Saxons and the Attacotti, who Saint Jerome claimed were cannibals. Once again, major hostilities were averted.

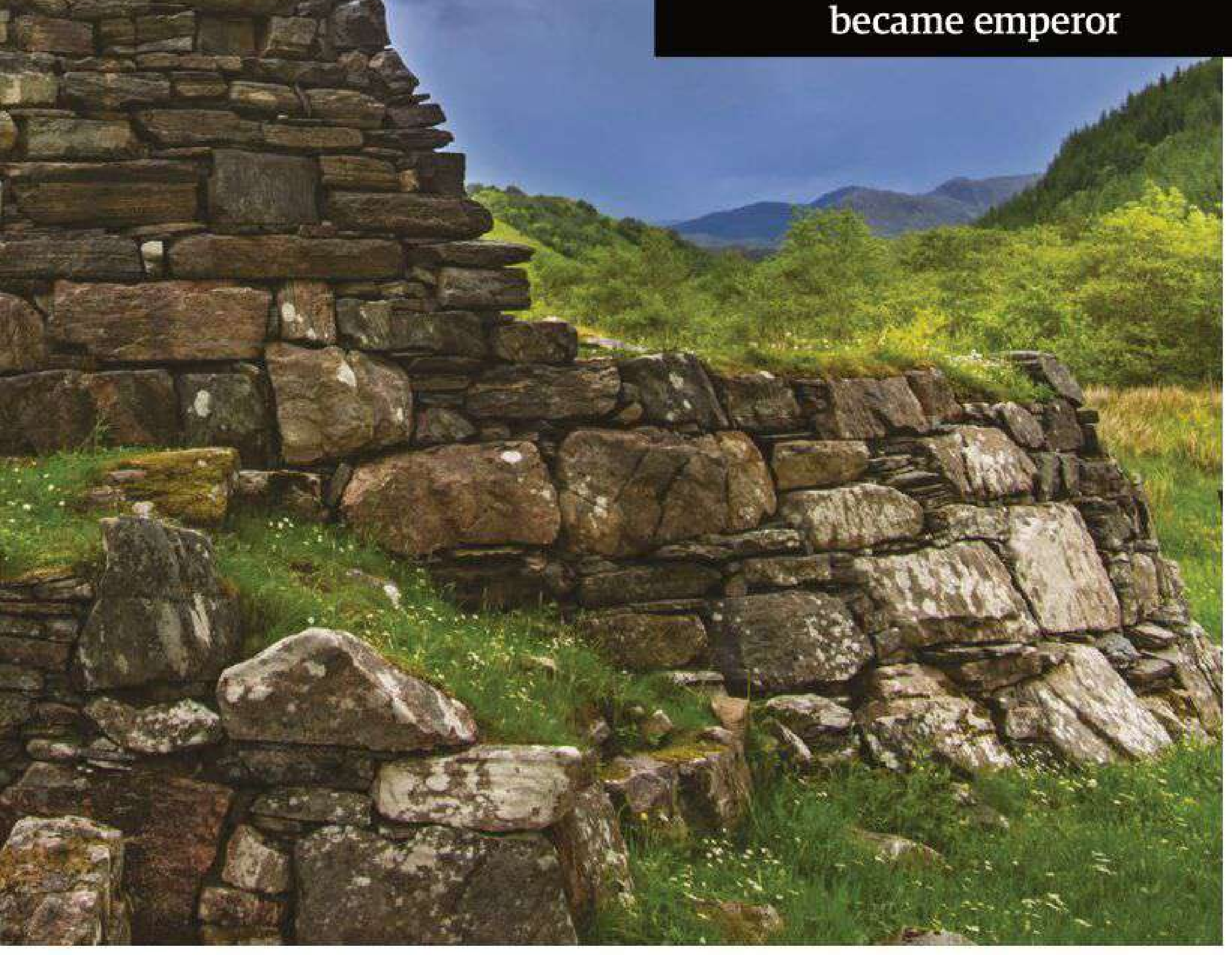
Several years later, during the emperorship of Valentinian, Roman rule in Britain temporarily ended during the 'Barbarian Conspiracy' of 367. The Picts and Irish crossed into imperial territory, while the Franks attacked Gaul along the English Channel, and there were mutinies among the Roman soldiers. Nectaridus, the commander of the Saxon Shore, was killed, and a general named Fullofaudes was captured in an ambush. Emperor Valentinian sent two commanders to remedy the situation; neither accomplished anything, but the second, named Jovinus, returned to Gaul and demanded a large army.

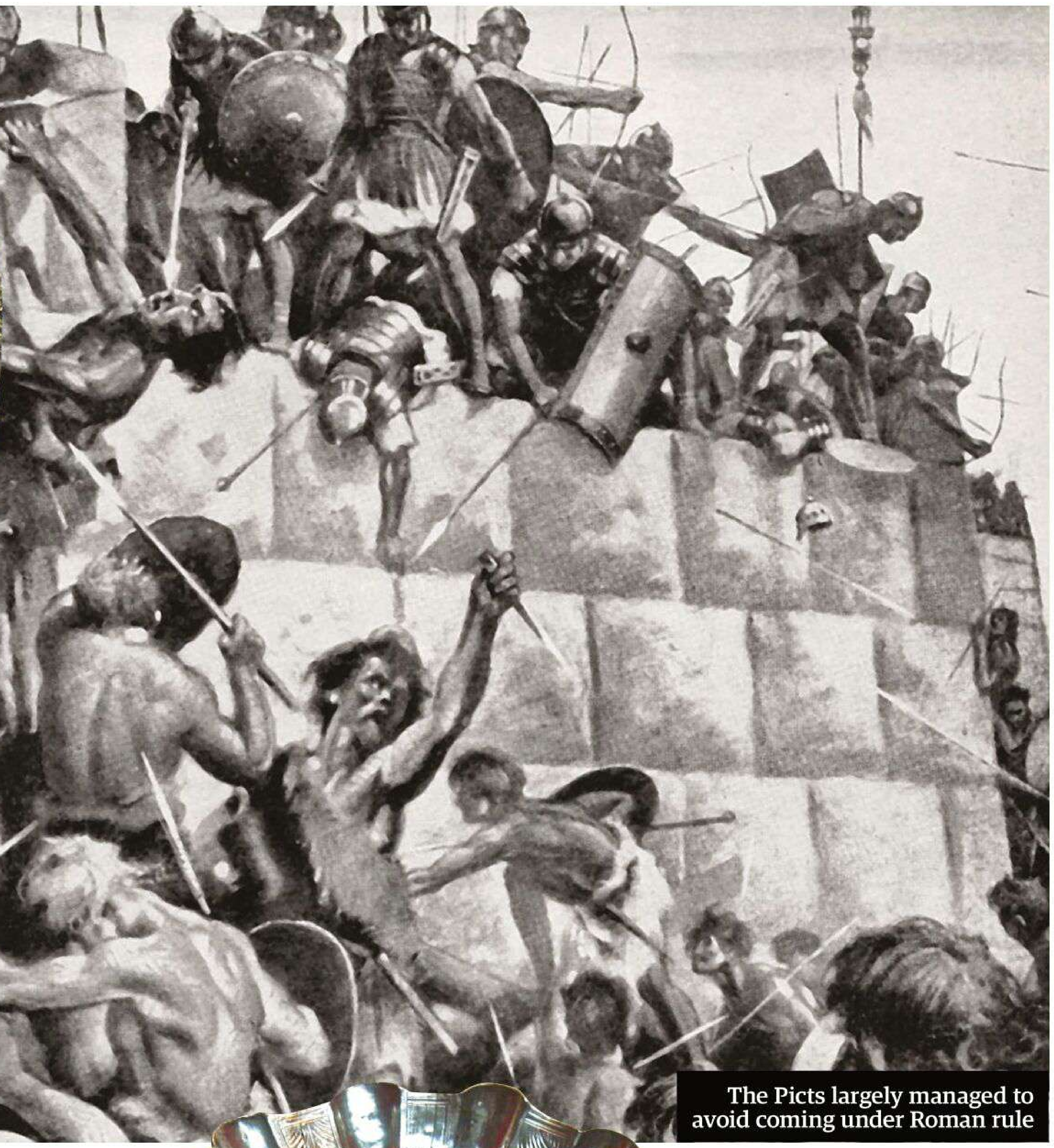
Marcellinus names two tribes of the Picts – the Dicalydones and Verturiones – who together with the Attacotti were ravaging south of Hadrian's Wall. When a third commander, named Theodosius, led his forces to London, he found soldiers, probably foederati (mercenaries), gathering booty from the citizens while driving away cattle and slaves. Theodosius' men defeated the rebels as well as the mutineers, who, after the issue of a general pardon, returned to the garrisons. Using London as a base, Theodosius restored order.

However impressive Theodosius' victory was, it paused rather than ended Pictish belligerence. One of his officers from the British campaign was Magnus Maximus, who gained his own victory over the Picts in a campaign during the year 382. That might have encouraged Magnus to declared himself emperor in 383 and move his army to Gaul. The Picts took advantage of his absence to move

D N MAG MAXIMUS P F AUG

Magnus Maximus was one commander who managed to beat the Picts in battle, and he later became emperor





The Picts largely managed to avoid coming under Roman rule

Part of the Traprain Law Treasure, East Lothian, Scotland

south again. According to Gildas, this was the first of three Pictish wars fought before 450.

There is much speculation about this war. Gildas claims it ended when Magnus was defeated and slain in 388, after which a delegation from Britain sought the victor, General Theodosius' son, now Emperor Theodosius, who sent troops to secure the island. Remaining with Gildas' – probably garbled – interpretation, the imperial troops established the frontier at a turf wall. Whether this refers to the Antonine Wall or is a mistaken reference to Hadrian's Wall is not known decisively.

In addition to warfare, the 4th century was a time of significant changes because of Pictish and Roman contact. Christianity was brought to Britain by the Romans, and at an early date missionaries might have laboured among the peoples who later were described as Picts. The 3rd-century theologian Origen of Alexandria, in his sixth homily on the Gospel of Luke, states, "The power of the Lord and Saviour is with those in Britain, separated from our world." Some of the Picts were Christian by the 4th century – Saint Patrick denounces "apostate Picts" in his letter to Coroticus.

Roman influence might have been responsible for changes in habitations too. By the 4th century the fortifications known as 'brochs' were being abandoned. These were stone towers where people and livestock could shelter from raiders. The livestock were on the ground, while the people were above on wooden platforms. They are often found in the vicinity of subterranean dwellings known as wheelhouses. Like the brochs, the wheelhouses were made of stone and placed to take advantage of the soil's moderating effect on temperature. The cubicles angled out from a central area. Although the wheelhouses continued to be used long after this period, a new type of structure was being built – a rectangular one similar to those used in Gaul and in Britain south of Hadrian's Wall.

Many questions remain about the Picts and Romans as imperial control of Britain was coming to an end. Did recruitment among the Picts provide troops for the various pretenders who rose up in Britain between 383 and 411? Signs of repair and/or abandonment along Hadrian's Wall suggest that patching rather than rebuilding was taking place.

Before we succumb to an interpretation that the Picts carried all before them, Marcellinus claims that Theodosius' campaign was so successful he was able to retake lands that had been outside imperial control for some time; this recovered region he called Valentia. This is confirmed by the *Notitia Dignitatum*, which lists it as an administrative unit. The question is where was it located? We do not know, but one suggestion is the land between the Antonine Wall and Hadrian's Wall. Nonetheless, when the Romans departed in 410, the Picts remained and would influence British culture for another 500 years.

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From Eboracum in the north to Dubris in the south, the Romans constructed many settlements in Britain that still stand today

KEY CITIES OF ROMAN BRITAIN

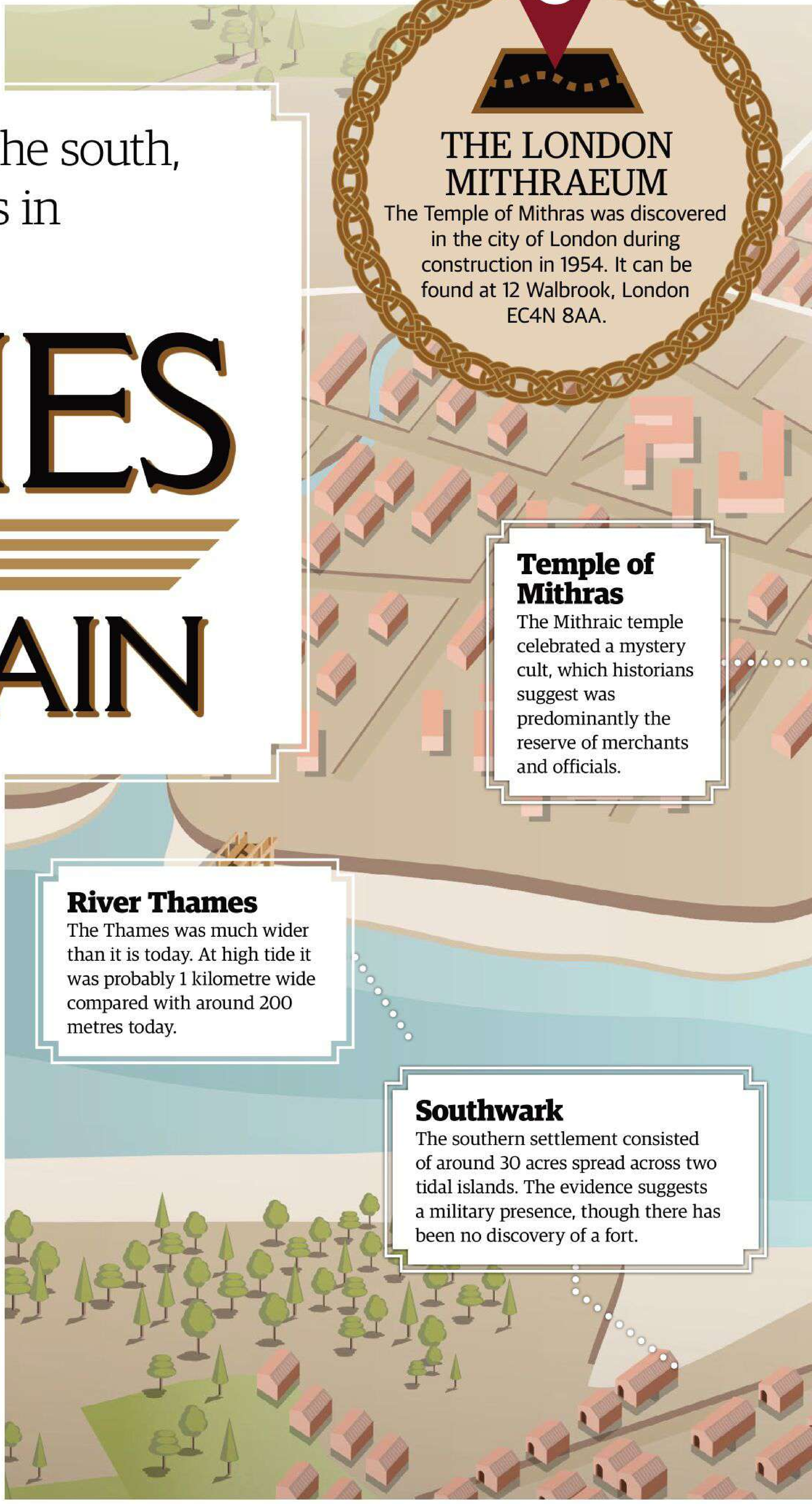
Written by Charlie Ginger

The province of Britannia was ruled by the Romans for approximately 367 years, during which time they constructed over 60 impressive civil and military installations, sections of which still stand today.

As with everything the Romans put their minds to, the settlements of Roman Britain were built to a planned structure. Imperative to each town were twin roads, one running east to west and the other south to north. The junction at which these two roads met acted as a central hub for the town, home to the marketplace, forum and administrative buildings. Businesses would also have been placed towards the centre, with surrounding roads – ranging from five to eight metres wide depending on their purpose – built parallel to the two main roads and at right angles to each other. Citizens lived in the outer reaches of the town and most of the buildings in these towns were crafted from timber, an easily sourced material.

Deluged with merchants and traders on a daily basis, the surfaces of the gravelled roads running through Roman towns were relaid every 25 years, contributing to higher and higher roads that eventually came to loom over the shops below them.

Now it's time to walk the streets of some of the most important cities in Roman Britain, discovering both their (often bloody) history and what made them such crucial locations in Rome's most northerly territories. From baths and basilicas to temples and theatres, Britain's transformation from a broken land of tribes to a thriving province built on law and order changed the face of a nation and the lives of its people forever, a legacy that has lasted for over 2,000 years.



THE LONDON MITHRAEUM

The Temple of Mithras was discovered in the city of London during construction in 1954. It can be found at 12 Walbrook, London EC4N 8AA.

Temple of Mithras

The Mithraic temple celebrated a mystery cult, which historians suggest was predominantly the reserve of merchants and officials.

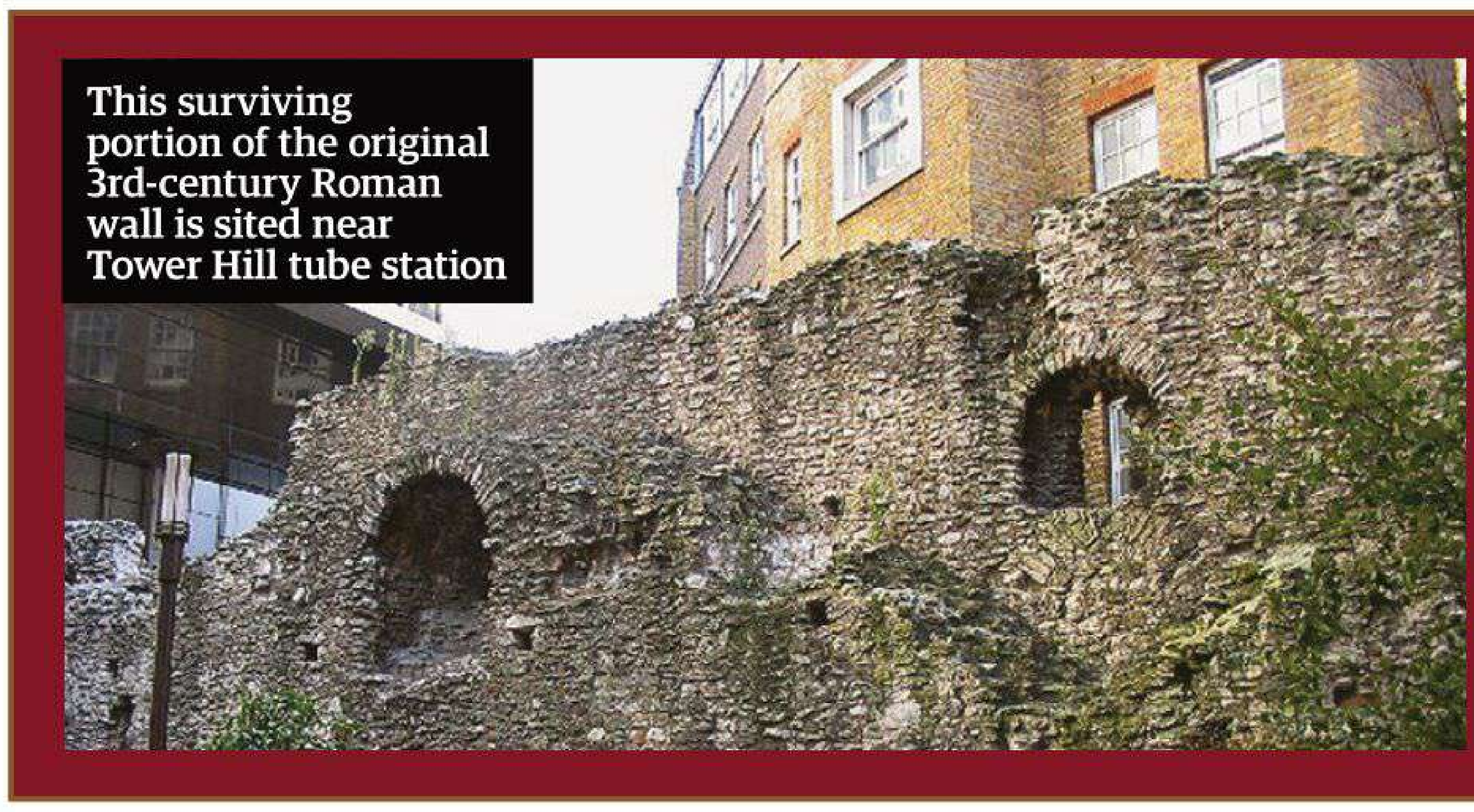
River Thames

The Thames was much wider than it is today. At high tide it was probably 1 kilometre wide compared with around 200 metres today.

Southwark

The southern settlement consisted of around 30 acres spread across two tidal islands. The evidence suggests a military presence, though there has been no discovery of a fort.

LONDINIUM TAKES SHAPE



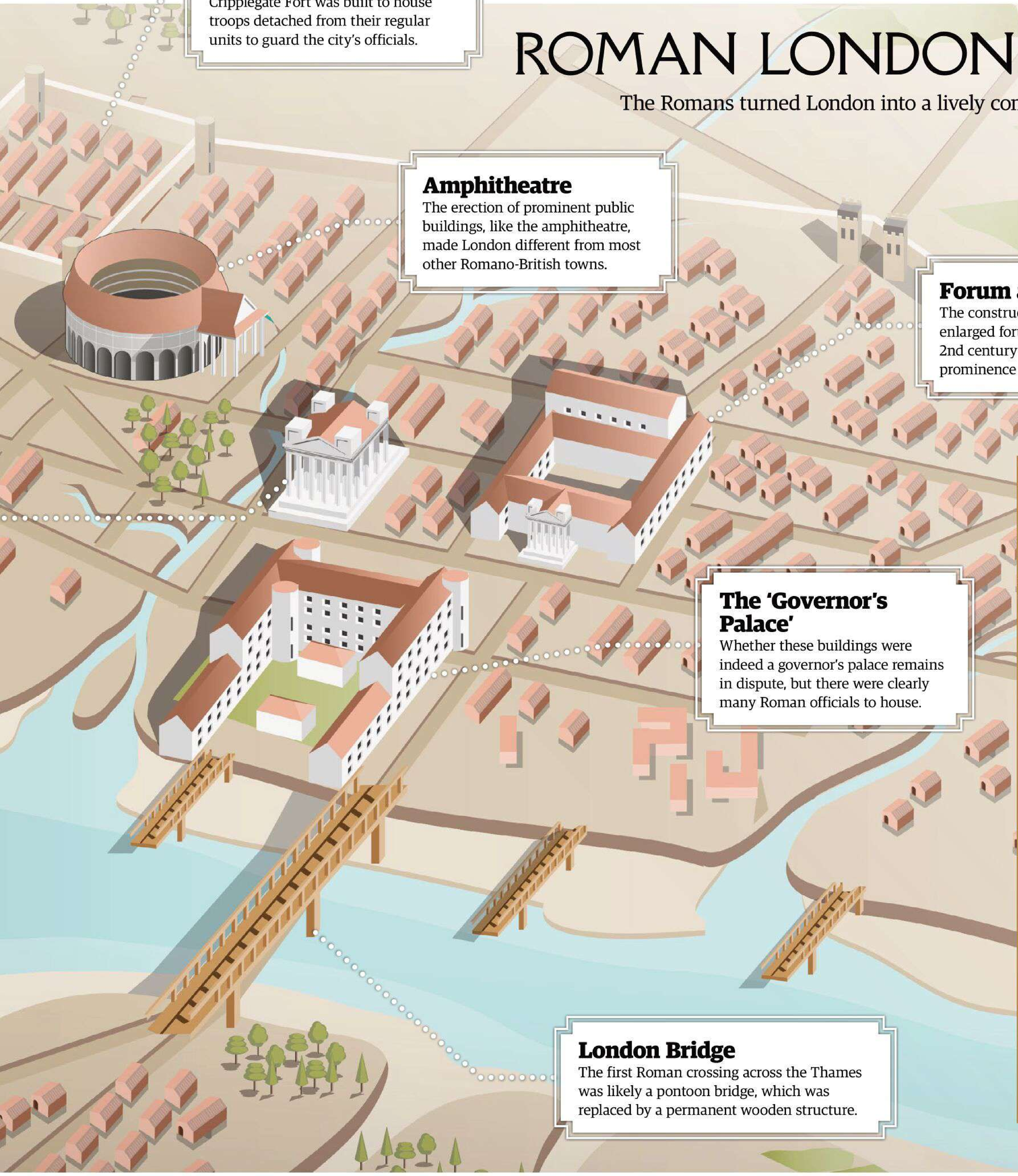
This surviving portion of the original 3rd-century Roman wall is sited near Tower Hill tube station

When writing of the London of 60 CE, the Roman historian Tacitus describes it as "a very important and busy centre for traders", proving that in less than a decade it had blossomed from a military supply base to a bustling and vibrant town. Despite a number of setbacks, London continued to grow throughout the 1st century, and alongside the small dwellings with their clay walls and thatched roofs, stone buildings sprang up, including public baths and temples, a fort and an amphitheatre, while a racing arena was built just to the south of modern-day St Paul's.

By the end of the 1st century, London was enjoying its most lively period of growth, though its great wall was not built until 100 years later, with historians placing its construction at around 200. Areas within the wall were still used for agriculture and pasture. The first London mint was established in the 3rd century, as was a riverine wall, which completed the city's network of defences.

ROMAN LONDON C.200 CE

The Romans turned London into a lively commercial centre



Cripplegate Fort
Established in the late 1st century, the Cripplegate Fort was built to house troops detached from their regular units to guard the city's officials.

Amphitheatre
The erection of prominent public buildings, like the amphitheatre, made London different from most other Romano-British towns.

Forum and basilica
The construction of a much-enlarged forum and basilica in the 2nd century suggests London's prominence in Roman thinking.

The 'Governor's Palace'
Whether these buildings were indeed a governor's palace remains in dispute, but there were clearly many Roman officials to house.

London Bridge
The first Roman crossing across the Thames was likely a pontoon bridge, which was replaced by a permanent wooden structure.

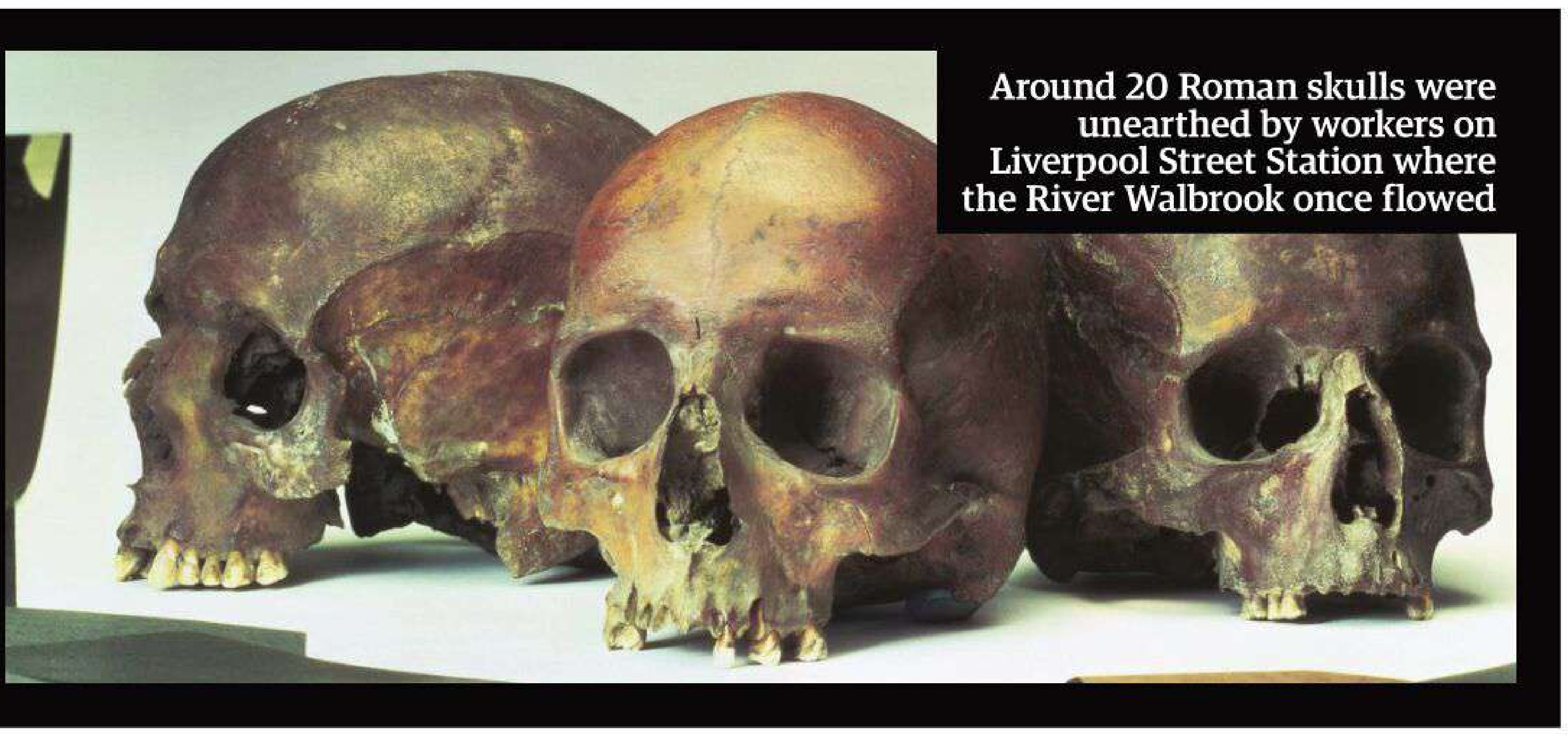
Modern-day London Bridge is built just a few hundred metres from the original Roman crossing

LONDON BRIDGE

The Roman crossing over the river was a wooden construction that ran around 90 metres east of the first stone-built London Bridge, connecting the north bank between the southern end of Pudding Lane to the south, just west of St Olav's Church in Southwark. Its exact position cannot be identified, but historians agree that it would have been an impressive sight, not least to the native inhabitants who were unaccustomed to such feats of engineering. "Half the legends of London arose upon its foundations," writes Peter Ackroyd in his biography of the city. "Miracles were performed and visions seen upon the new wooden thoroughfare."

BLOOD AND FIRE

From the earliest times, London has been a place of blood and fire. Conflagrations scorched the city throughout Roman times with extensive blazes destroying great swathes during the Flavian, Hadrianic and Antonine periods. The Hadrianic Fire (c.120-25) appears to have been the most potent, and though rebuilding occurred, it was not as dense. The city's destruction in the revolt of Boudica stemmed its development for several years, and there is a legend of slaughter attributed to the Celtic tribes by medieval chronicler Geoffrey of Monmouth, who says the warriors threw the heads of Roman legionaries into a "brook in the city". The discovery of skulls in the bed of the Walbrook River in 1860 has been linked to this story.



Around 20 Roman skulls were unearthed by workers on Liverpool Street Station where the River Walbrook once flowed

CAMULODUNUM

Modern-day location ◆ Colchester

The city forever synonymous with Boudica's fury

Founded in the 1st century BCE, Camulodunum is thought to be the oldest city in Britain and was the first capital of the Roman province of Britannia. Classed as a 'colonia', it was deemed an extension of the city of Rome, yet this lofty status would not preserve it when the storms of rebellion broke.

Erected during the Iron Age, Camulodunum was ruled by a series of tribal kings prior to Claudius' invasion in 43 CE, the last of whom was Caratacus, who, along with his brother Togodumnus, began to subjugate vast swathes of southern Britannia. Their ravenous ambitions were sufficient to alarm the king of the Atrebates, who pleaded with his allies in Rome for their intervention. Requiring a military triumph to solidify his position, Claudius exploited the opportunity and dispatched an invasion force across the Channel.

This sudden change in foreign policy must have come as quite a surprise to the Britons, for there is no evidence that they were in any way hostile towards the Romans before Claudius' decision to use military force to expand his influence and dash any notions back in Rome that he was a weak ruler ripe for toppling. In fact, the presence of Roman traders living along the Thames and the fact that the natives enjoyed trading across the Empire suggests that Claudius was interrupting a peaceful and mutually beneficial trading arrangement purely for political expediency.

The Roman legions made short work of their task, slaying Togodumnus and sending Caratacus scrambling into exile. Later defeated in battle, he was eventually taken in by the Brigantes who promptly handed him over to their Roman allies. With the city bending to its new ruler - 11 tribal chieftains submitted to Claudius - the Romans were able to begin construction on a large fortification that would secure their newly won position.

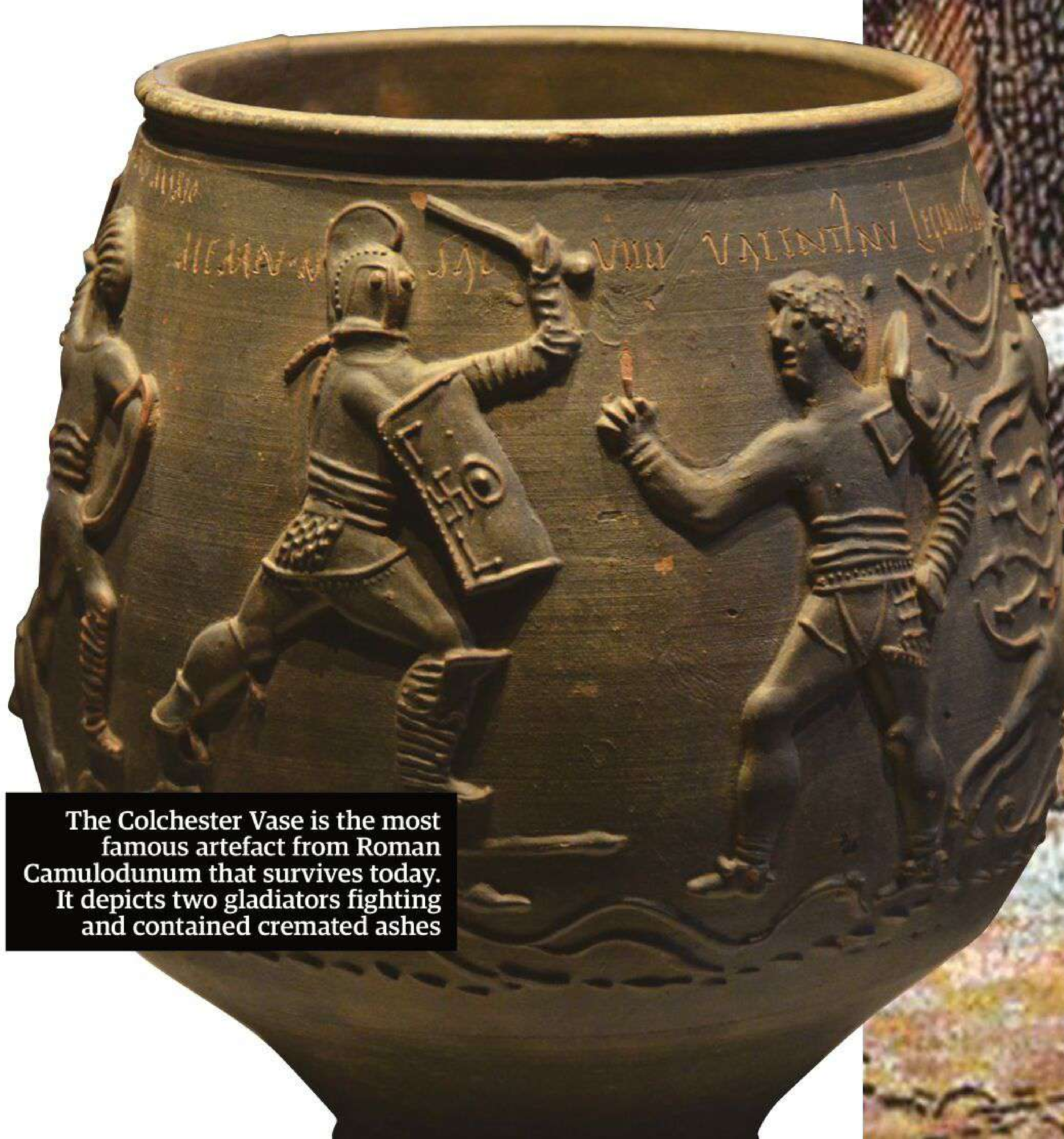
Home to the XX Valeria Victrix Legion, the fort - or castrum in Latin - soon found itself surrounded by the dwellings of natives eager to serve. Within just ten years of its foundation, Camulodunum - which was named in honour of the Roman war god Camulos - boasted a forum, basilica and council meeting room. However, the fledgling city's most impressive structure was without doubt the Temple of Claudius.

Alongside a statute dedicated to the goddess of Victory, the Temple of Claudius was a towering monument to Roman might. Constructed with mortar and stone, its sloping roof was supported by 32 pillars and its interior opened into a chamber almost 300 metres squared. Yet despite its impressive dimensions, it is safe to assume that the finer details of this splendid example of Roman architecture were lost on the locals who had been taxed to pay for it.

Prior to the temple's construction, the occupying legion had been withdrawn from the city, leaving behind a core population of ex-soldiers who occupied the former barracks along with their families - many of them given land confiscated by the Trinovantes. Rome hoped the presence of these veterans would help to maintain the peace in Camulodunum, and for a time this proved to be the case. Then Rome overplayed its hand, with dire consequences for Camulodunum.

Angered by Roman mistreatment, Boudica, queen of the Iceni, mustered a force said to number in the tens of thousands, including allies from the disenfranchised Trinovante tribe, and marched for Camulodunum. Once the centre of Rome's military strength in the province, Camulodunum was poorly defended, with walls deemed far too pricey to be worth erecting. To compound its desperate situation Gaius Suetonious Paulinus, the governor of Britannia, was away campaigning (or rather massacring) the druids on the Isle of Anglesey. With only its veterans and a contingent of around 200 men sent from Londinium left to face a native force of thousands enraged by years of taxation and hunger, the city didn't stand a chance. The attacking army quickly set about slaughtering its citizens, with some estimates placing the death toll at 70,000, and burning its buildings to the ground. Yet while Camulodunum's defeat was gruesome and total, it would rise again from the ashes.

Following Boudica's defeat at the Battle of Watling Street in 60/61 CE, a defeat that smashed the rebellion once and for all, Camulodunum was steadily rebuilt, its streets branching out to fill a greater expanse than its doomed predecessor. It rapidly blossomed into an industrial hub, producing samian pottery, coins, bricks and even wine, the loss of its status as the capital to Londinium proving no impediment to its revival.



The Colchester Vase is the most famous artefact from Roman Camulodunum that survives today. It depicts two gladiators fighting and contained cremated ashes

Boudica's army destroyed Londinium and Verulamium (St Albans) after torching Camulodunum

EBORACUM

Modern-day location ◆ York

Home of the doomed legion

As with Camulodunum, the historic city of Eboracum was founded in 71 CE for military purposes. With an assault on the territory of the Brigantes planned for the coming campaign season, Quintus Petillius Cerialis - a formidable Roman general who would soon become governor of Britannia - astutely ordered the construction of a fort that would secure his position before he marched out to face the natives.

Under his command, IX Legion set to work erecting a fortification on elevated ground that overlooked the River Ouse close to where it joined the River Foss. Its name meant 'yew tree place' in Latin on account of the abundance of trees of this type in the surrounding area. Yet the trees were not the only permanent structures to encircle the troops - the locals were not long in building settlements nearby that afforded them ready access to the Roman soldiers, and thereby a means of trading with them.

Having arrived in Britannia 28 years prior, the Romans had taken their time progressing north, and had they not been provoked they may indeed have taken longer about it. However, they were prompted to infest the hills of what is now Yorkshire by the actions of a tribal king who was determined to resist the foreign invaders.

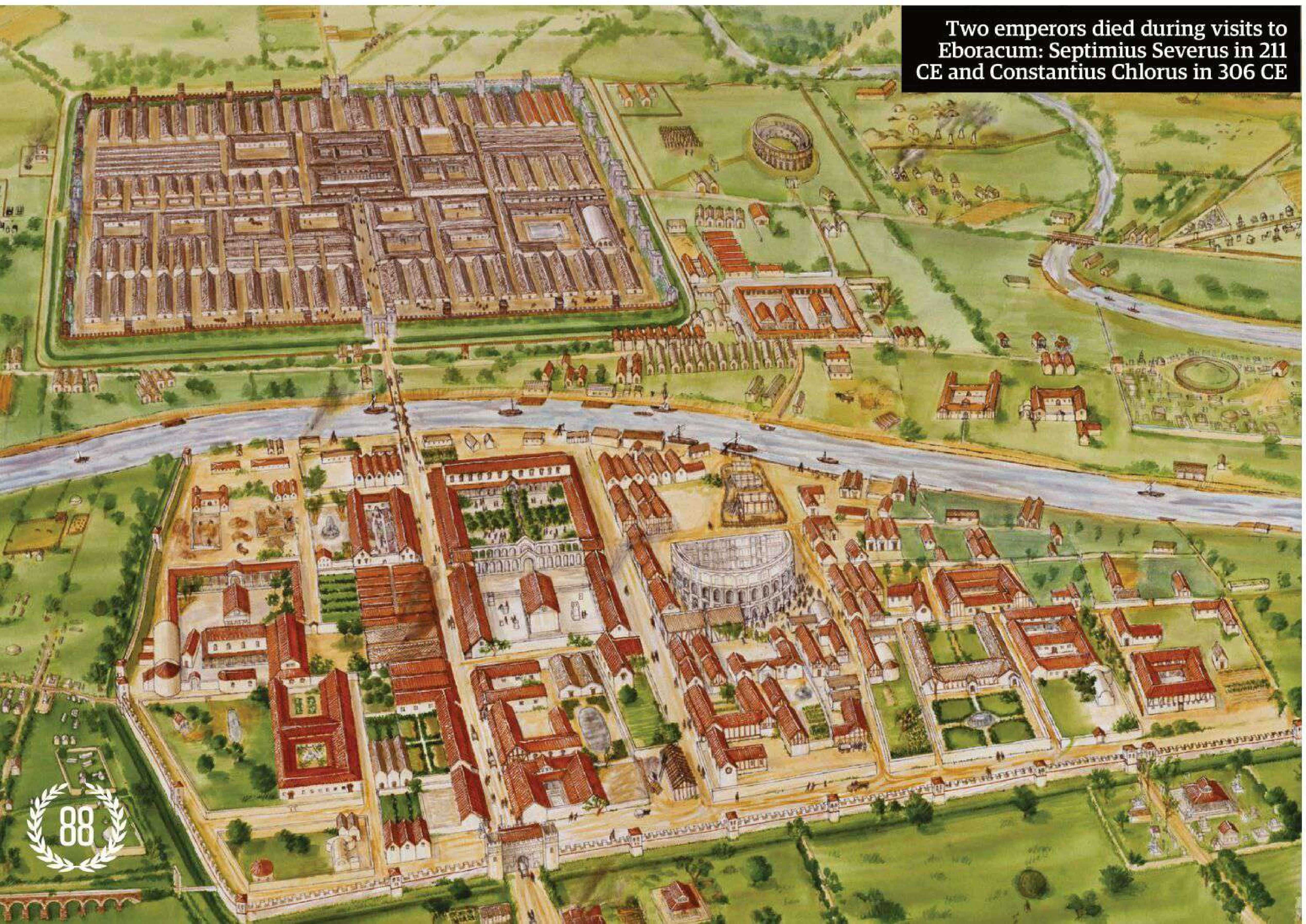
Disgusted by his wife's desire to work with the Romans, Venutius, king of the Brigantes, did the unthinkable and fought both his former spouse and then the Romans who sought to protect her. This sudden eruption of hostilities, which saw Queen Cartimandua imprisoned by her husband's men in 69 CE, was never going to be ignored by Petillius Cerialis, who swiftly manoeuvred the 5,400 men of IX Legion north from Lincoln to the empty lands that would soon become Eboracum.

At the time of their arrival there wasn't a native settlement in the area, so the Romans were free to select a naturally strong defensive position for their new fort. With rivers on either side providing natural obstacles and a means by which to ship in men and supplies, the location was an ideal launching point from which to attack the warring Brigantes and settle the region.

Reliant on the spending power of the men of IX Legion - which was originally created by none other than Julius Caesar and also called IX Hispana following its participation in campaigns in what is modern-day Spain - the people of Eboracum began to produce a vast array of goods. These ranged from military pottery and kilns to glassware, metalworks and leather items for military use. Arguably the most highly prized object made in the vicinity was Whitby Jet, a black gemstone that resembles coal and was used to craft jewelry such as rings, necklaces and bracelets. The jet was used locally and shipped out to the far reaches of the empire, further bolstering Eboracum's young economy.

As for the Romans themselves, they did not sit idly by, instead labouring to build numerous structures within the developing city. The most prominent of these is the Multangular Tower, which is dated to between 200 and 250 CE. Situated at the west corner of the city's fortress, it was originally built from timber, only to be remade from stone later on. It's believed that the tower would have measured ten metres tall, double the height of the fort's stone walls. Yet this wasn't a standard observation tower, for its pioneering shape enabled the troops inside to fire missiles across as tribal warriors attempted to scale its walls.

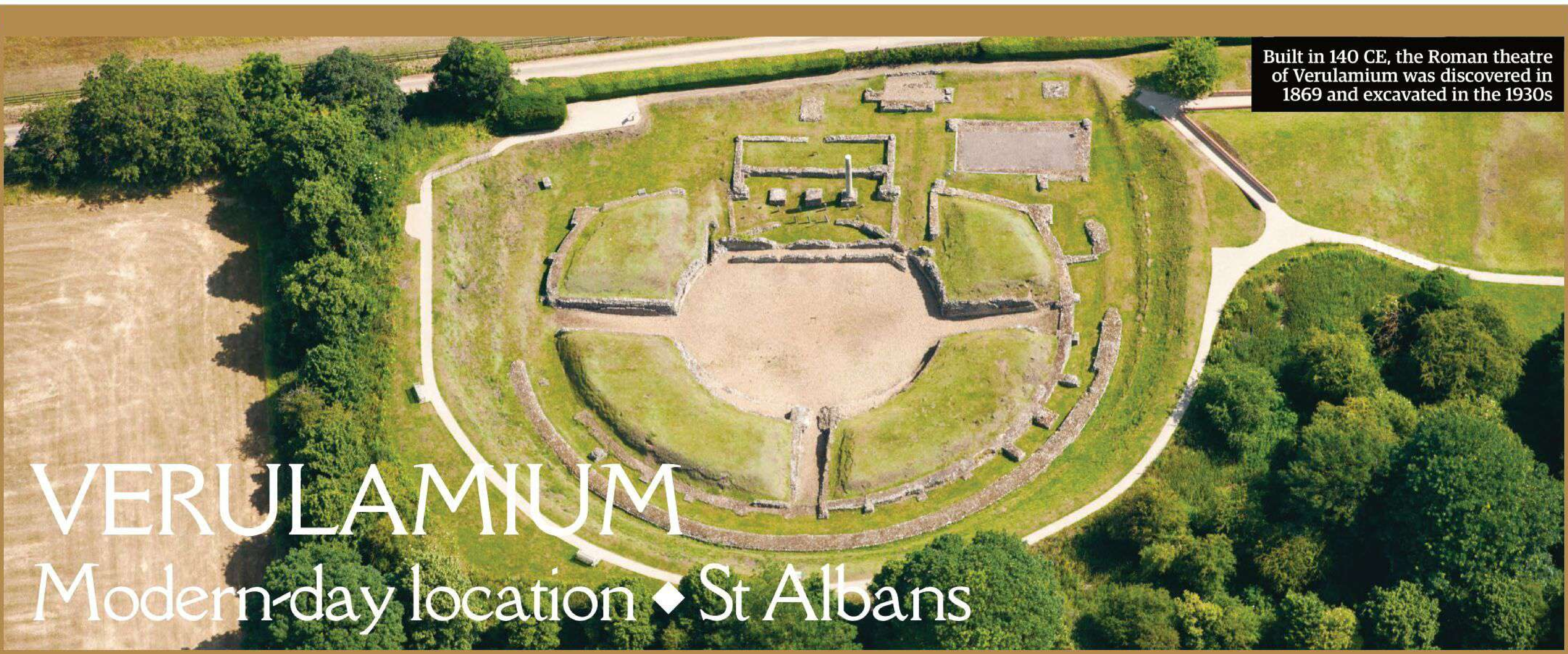
The lower half of the Multangular Tower dates back to the Roman occupation, while the top section was added during the Medieval period


Two emperors died during visits to Eboracum: Septimius Severus in 211 CE and Constantius Chlorus in 306 CE

Bizarrely, while the Multangular Tower remains a highly visible and popular tourist attraction today, historians are to this day still trying to work out where Eboracum's amphitheatre was built, although some historians believe that there may have been two. Amazingly, this isn't the only puzzle that York and its former inhabitants still pose.

The disappearance of IX Legion remains one of the greatest mysteries from the Roman era. A battle-hardened and highly regarded force, the legion was sent north into Caledonia in 82 or 83 CE under the leadership of Julius Agricola, and fought bravely at the momumental clash that was the Battle of Mons Graupius. Thanks to an inscription found on a stone that was unearthed in York in 1864, historians know that IX Legion had returned to Eboracum in 108 CE as the fort underwent construction. However, where they went after this point is yet to be discerned.

Conversely, what became of Eboracum is beyond doubt. Occupied long after the vanishing of its founders, the city continued to blossom during the reign of Constantine, who was acclaimed as emperor by the troops stationed in Eboracum. As the most important champion of a fledgling Christian faith, his religious leanings saw the appointment of a bishop in the city. To this day it is one of the largest cities in northern England.



Built in 140 CE, the Roman theatre of Verulamium was discovered in 1869 and excavated in the 1930s

VERULAMIUM

Modern-day location ◆ St Albans

The Celtic home that would become the pride of Rome

The city that would become Verulamium was originally built on a Celtic site known as Verlamion ('settlement above the marsh') and acted as a key strategic hub for the Catuvellauni tribe. Hostile to the arrival of Rome, the Catuvellauni had occupied this Iron Age settlement since before 20 BCE, a fact attested to by the existence of coins minted in Verlamion by the then-king of the Catuvellauni, Tasciovanus.

Evidently a king of ambition, Tasciovanus is thought to have ousted the ruler of the Trinovantes, Addedomarus, from his seat in Camulodunum, as coins issued from the city between 15 and 10 BCE bear his mark. However, coins minted after this date in Verlamion seem to suggest that Tasciovanus was keen to stress his status - possibly in the knowledge that not all of his subjects viewed him as their king - as rightful ruler of the south, as these later coins were embossed with the Brittonic term for 'legitimate king'.

Despite being firmly embedded in their territory, which encompassed what is today southern Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire, the Catuvellauni could do little in the face of Claudius' invasion in 43 CE. The tribe's efforts to resist proved futile as their lands were consumed by an expanding Roman sphere of influence. Yet while this was bad news for the proud Catuvellauni, it heralded a time of change and prosperity for Verlamion.

Promptly retitled Verulamium by its new occupants, the city rapidly developed into one of Roman Britain's largest and wealthiest settlements. In fact, such was its importance to Rome that in 50 CE it was bestowed the honour of being classified as a municipium, entitling its citizens to certain privileges, although not the right to vote in the elections of the four officials chosen every year to run the city, while also making them liable for taxation and military service. Everything about Verulamium, from its name to its people, was now Roman. However, while this special status afforded the city the riches and protection of Rome, it also generated a sense of disenfranchisement among those tribes who remained opposed to the very presence of Romans, let alone their burgeoning settlements and well-heeled supporters.

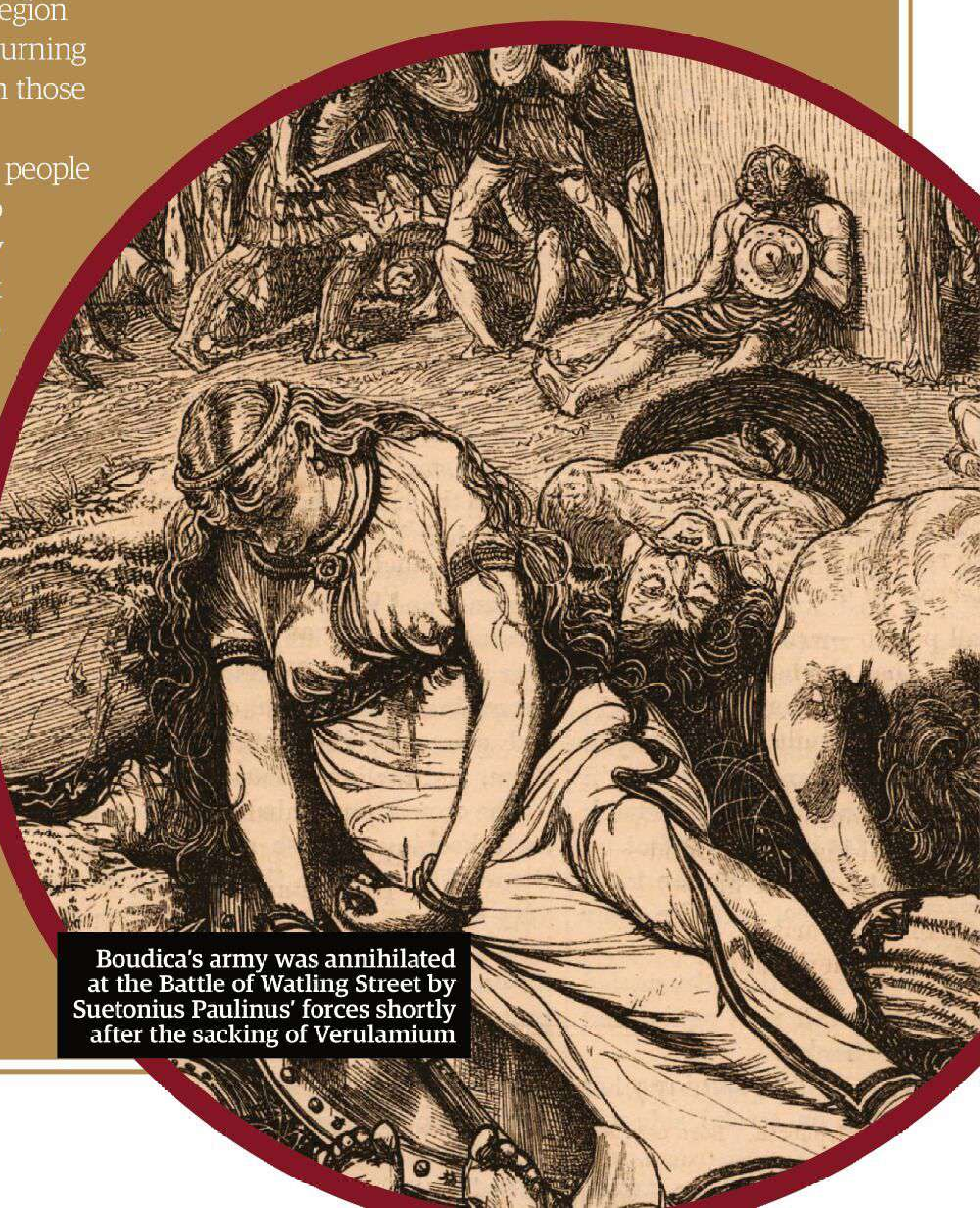
This deep sense of loathing finally erupted in an orgy of killing in 60 CE when Boudica's army marched on Camulodunum and slaughtered its people before razing the city to the ground. Driven by the thrill of victory and a desire to exact further revenge, the Iceni and their allies turned their rage to Londinium.

Lacking the men required to mount a successful defence of the city, the governor of Roman Britain, Gaius Suetonious Paulinus, took the difficult decision to abandon it to the ravages of the looming tribal army. Boudica's hordes met and defeated a host of Roman troops belonging to IX Legion before falling on Londinium, once more burning everything before them and cutting down those who had not evacuated without mercy.

News of the coming storm reached the people of Verulamium, some of whom hurried to pack as many of their possessions as they could carry before leaving the city to seek sanctuary elsewhere. Those who chose to remain, or were perhaps unable to leave, lived (or rather didn't) to regret it. Once more Boudica's army refused to show even the slightest bit of compassion as they rampaged across the city. As they had in Camulodunum and Londinium, the attackers desecrated sacred Roman sites and employed inventive means of murder, impaling some victims on spikes. Verulamium was utterly destroyed, and the total body count from the three cities unfortunate enough to be targeted by Boudica stood at between 70,000 and 80,000.

However, the Romans were nothing if not resilient and, as was the case with the other devastated settlements, Verulamium was rebuilt. A basilica, theatre (the only Roman theatre built in Britain that is still visible) and a forum dedicated to Emperor Vespasian were among the new buildings that steadily began to crop up throughout a city that would expand to cover over 125 acres of land. The people of the city also had access to public baths and temples. Even the ravages of two fires in 155 and 250 CE respectively couldn't halt Verulamium's impressive recovery.

The site of Verulamium Park in what is today the town of St Albans is still home to many wonderfully painted mosaics, the well-preserved remains of a hypocaust system and even the outline of the London Gate, all of which survived Rome's abandonment in 410.

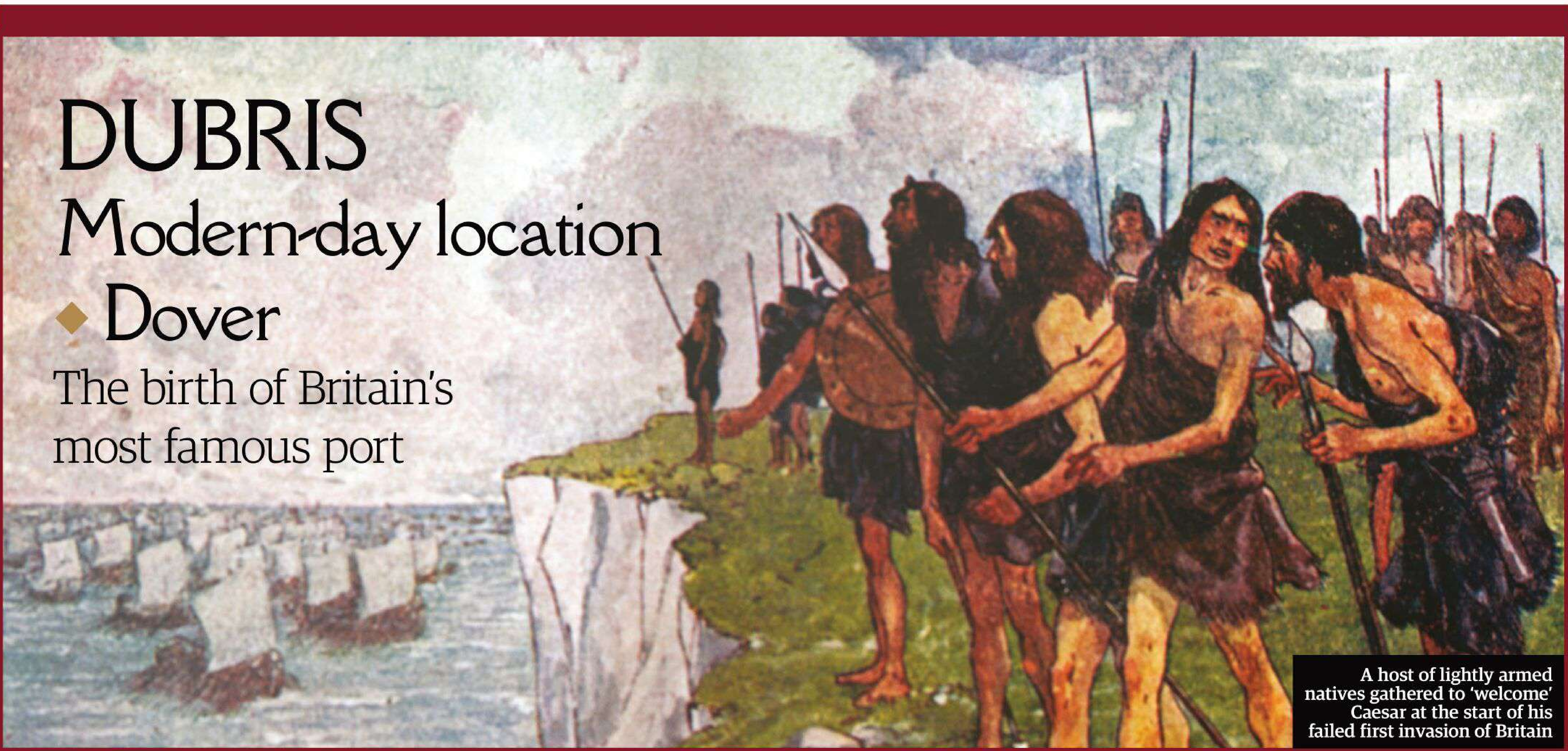


Boudica's army was annihilated at the Battle of Watling Street by Suetonius Paulinus' forces shortly after the sacking of Verulamium

DUBRIS

Modern-day location ◆ Dover

The birth of Britain's most famous port



A host of lightly armed natives gathered to 'welcome' Caesar at the start of his failed first invasion of Britain

It's no secret that the Romans were brilliant strategists able to spot an opportunity or exploit natural features to their full extent, and nowhere in Roman Britain testifies more to their eye for a military advantage than the port town of Dover.

Located on an estuary of the River Dour, Dover was identified by Julius Caesar's military advisor Gaius Volusenus as an ideal landing place for an invasion force in 55 BCE. In order to acquire such knowledge, Volusenus crossed the Channel in a single boat to examine the coastline of the mysterious lands north of Gaul.

Unfortunately for Caesar, the natural benefits of landing his fleet at Dover were somewhat outweighed by the very real threat of an unwelcoming host of Britons armed with javelins that had gathered to greet the strangers from beyond the sea. Wisely choosing not to force the issue and risk the slaughter of his men as they leapt from their boats, Caesar ordered his fleet to sail further up the Kentish coast, where they secured a beachhead but little else. Undeterred, the ever-ambitious future dictator of Rome returned the following year with a larger armada, one that he claims struck fear into the hearts of the previously obstinate natives, so much so that they didn't mount any resistance to what was to prove a far more successful invasion.

Having safely emptied the contents of his 800 ships onto the beach at Dover, Caesar wasted no time in seizing the initiative. Appointing an officer by the name of Quintus Atrius to guard the beachhead and command ten cohorts and 300 cavalry, Caesar took a contingent of troops and trudged inland. Meeting resistance at the River Stour, he promptly scattered the disorganised rabble of natives and pressed on, later evicting the survivors from a defensive position secreted in woodland.

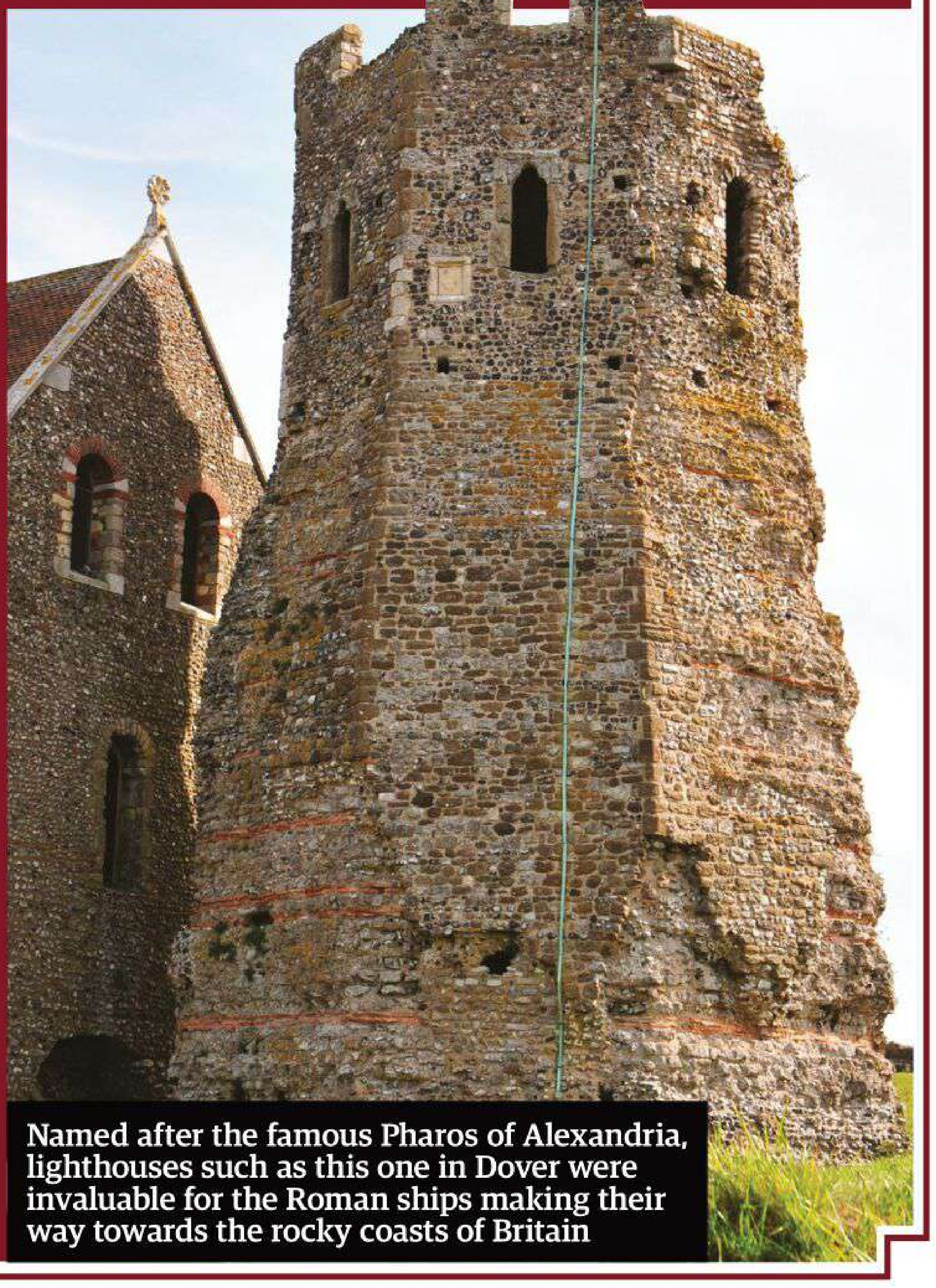
Although Caesar could claim the unprecedented achievement of being the first Roman to set foot in Britannia, he didn't spend a great deal of time there, and the permanent man-made features of Dubris (meaning 'waters') didn't begin to spring up until after Claudius' invasion in 43 CE. Given its importance as the nearest point to the continent and thereby literally the Romans' first port of call when transporting men and supplies across the Channel, one of the first buildings constructed was a lighthouse. At 24 metres tall and built of stone, the lighthouse is said to be the oldest building in England, and it would have provided much-needed guidance to Roman ships crossing the choppy waters between their newly acquired province and the mainland of the empire. Still standing today, it has outlived the other Roman lighthouse (known as a pharose) built on the Western Heights opposite it.

Keen to cement their position, the Romans also built Richborough Castle in what is now the settlement of Richborough in Kent after Claudius' invasion. It was here that some of the men of the Classis Britannica, the Roman fleet that occupied the waters off Britannia, were stationed. Lengthy sections of both its imposing walls and defensive ditches remain today.

Without question, the most informative and decorative Roman addition to Dubris is the famous Roman Painted House. Labelled 'Britain's Buried Pompeii', this elaborately painted building was unearthed in the 1970s and was part of a vast structure that acted as a hotel for travellers sailing to and from mainland Europe. Built in 200 CE, its ancient walls are covered in over 400 square metres of murals depicting Bacchus, the god of wine, fertility and agriculture. Patrons would also have enjoyed the comforts of a hypocaust, a system that supplied underfloor heating – that is until troops demolished entire sections of the hotel in 270 as they worked to erect a larger fortification (the Saxon Short Fort), which explains the presence of a fort wall that runs through the hotel. Preserved today entirely by volunteers, the Painted House is one of the finest examples of Roman architecture that can be found in Britain today.

Aside from its impressive architecture, Dubris was a thriving town that quickly outpaced nearby Rutupiae in output and importance as an increasing number of houses were built. Along with nearby Lemanis (modern-day Lympne), Dubris and Rutupiae developed into vital trading and military posts, with all three linked to Watling Street, a stretch of track that the Romans later paved and one that ultimately connected Londinium and Durovernum Cantiacorum (Canterbury).

Rome's decision to fortify the land above the White Cliffs proved characteristically prescient, for the port of Dover remains a vital link between Britain and mainland Europe to this day, its multitude of natural advantages realised by the Romans over 2,000 years ago.



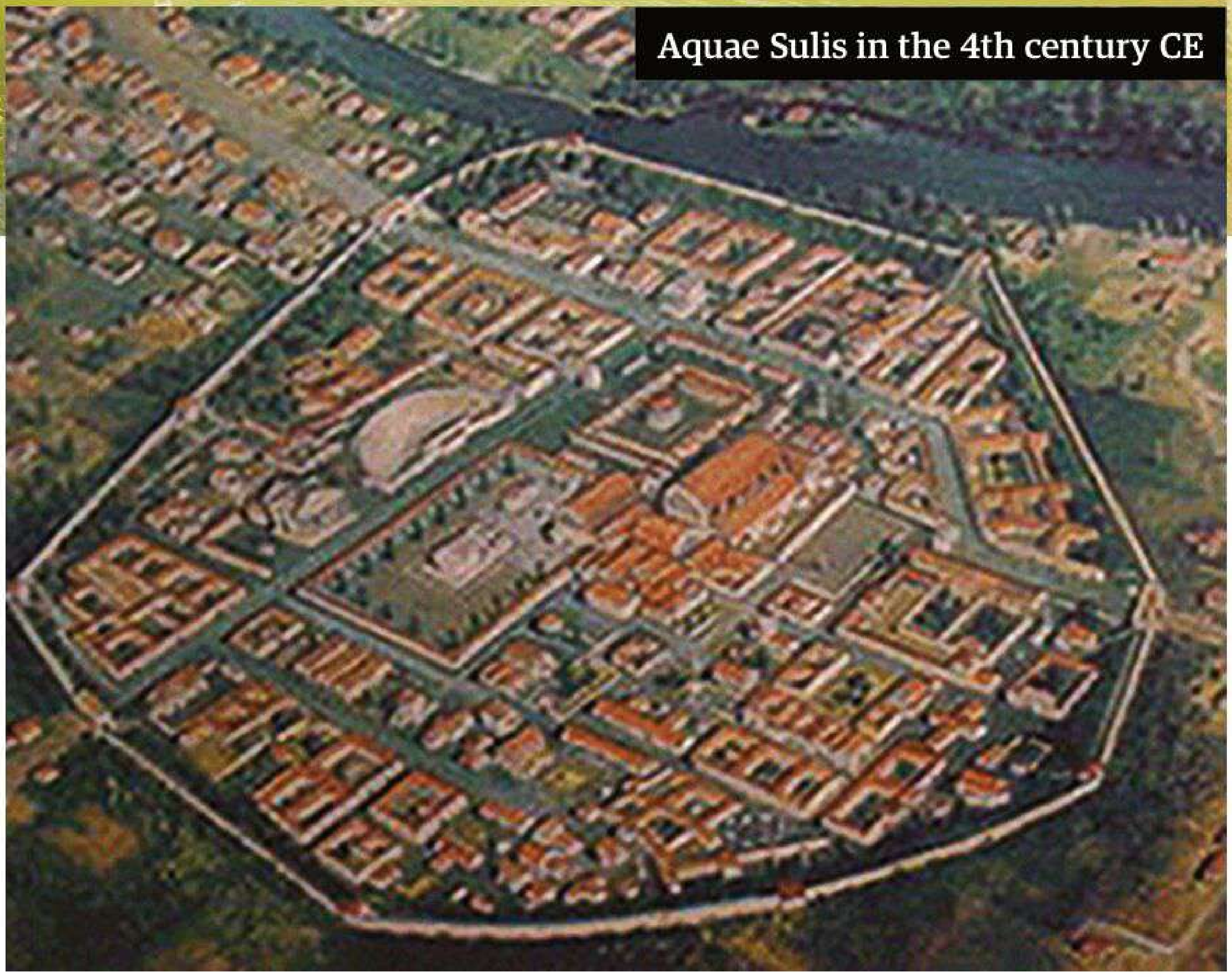
Named after the famous Pharos of Alexandria, lighthouses such as this one in Dover were invaluable for the Roman ships making their way towards the rocky coasts of Britain

One of Britain's most popular tourist attractions, the Roman Baths attract over 1 million visitors a year

AQUAE SULIS

Modern-day location ◆ Bath

From healing waters flowed one of Britain's most visited cities



Aquae Sulis in the 4th century CE

Bath is a city bubbling with mystery. According to the legends, before Romulus and Remus had toiled to build the ancient city of Rome in 753 BCE, a beleaguered prince by the name of Bladud was ordered to head into exile and tend to pigs due to his catching of the fateful disease leprosy. Wandering alone, Bladud herded his porcine companions, also afflicted with a skin condition, towards the site of what is known today as Bath, where the pigs promptly plunged into a pool of heated mud. Miraculously, when they emerged their skin was healed, encouraging Bladud to follow suit and dive in, thereby curing his leprosy in the balmy waters of Bath.

Bladud's improbable recovery from a disease that was thought incurable until as recently as the 1940s is exactly that: highly improbable. However, the healing properties of Bath's natural springs are well known, and something the Romans appreciated as far back as 50 BCE when they erected a temple nearby. Eager not to offend the locals, they diplomatically dedicated it to Sul, the Celtic goddess of the hot springs, and to Minerva, the Roman goddess of healing. This in turn led to the town of Bath, construction of which began around the same time, being named Aquae Sulis (the healing waters of Sulis).

One of only two classical temples dating from the Roman occupation of Britain, the Temple of Sulis Minerva was continuously enhanced over a course of 300 years, and despite falling into ruin it has, along with the famous baths, provided historians with various treasures.

The Temple's pediment is among one of the best preserved finds. A heavy circular stone, this ornamental piece sported the face of a Gorgon, a steely eyed creature from Greek mythology with serpents for hair. It must have been quite a forboding sight for the patrons of the temple, a permanent reminder that this symbol of Sulis was always watching. A bronze head of Sulis herself also survives, punctuated with rivets that would once have secured her helmet in place.

Another exciting find was made as recently as 2007 when archaeologists dug up what has become known as the Beau Street Hoard – a vast collection of 17,577 coins dating from 32 BCE to 274 CE that is the largest collection of Roman artefacts ever discovered in a town of Roman Britain.

However, arguably the most intriguing finds are the 130 'curse tablets' hauled out of the sacred spring. Largely scrawled in code, these tablets exhorted the deity Sulis to punish criminals (mainly thieves) until the writer of the curse (usually the victim) had been given their stolen belongings back. Some of the more creative cursers requested that their intended target be made unable to sleep, lose the ability to control their bodily functions or, worse still, "lose their minds and eyes". The curse of death was presumably reserved for only the gravest offenders.

The baths in which these aggrieved locals washed are famous the world over. The most impressive part of this elaborate structure is the Great Bath. Lined with lead sheets and almost two-metres deep, this pool would have been supplied with warm water from the natural springs. Broad pillars were eventually built to support its new ceramic roof, stony limbs that jutted out into the water.

Smaller in size but no less impressive were the East and West baths, the former home to a pool of tepid water and a range of heating rooms, while the latter contained a series of breathtaking plunge pools that brave swimmers could dive into following their swim and any additional treatments received in the adjoining rooms.

Aside from its religious and cultural importance, not to mention its desirability as a prestigious retirement city for the elderly of Roman Britain, Aquae Sulis was also a vital hub in the advanced system of Roman roads that cut across the province. A nearby port on the River Avon offered another means by which goods and people could come and go. If the elegance and expense of many of the citizen's gravestones are any barometer, the city benefited hugely from such ready access to trade routes.

Aquae Sulis offered a level of luxury far from common in all Roman towns, but it did also have a military presence at various points. Inscriptions that have been found within the city talk of a number of legions, including the VI Victorious and II Augustan Legions. Even so, any evidence that the town was occupied by Roman soldiers on a permanent basis is yet to be uncovered.

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VINDOLANDA

Perhaps one of the best-known settlements of Roman Britain is the fort of Vindolanda - one of the many military sites along Hadrian's Wall. It had a town attached to it, complete with bathhouse and a guesthouse, but it was the Vindolanda tablets that brought fame to the fort. These tablets recorded the everyday life of soldiers, including their roles and what they ate.

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DIVIDING

In an attempt to pacify Britannia the territory was divided

It's fair to say that life for Septimius Severus was far from easy. After all, as one of the five claimants for the title of Roman Emperor in 193 CE following the assassination of Commodus, he'd been a key component of a bloody civil war. And while he emerged victorious, trouble was never too far away.

Rivals Pertinax and Didius Julianus had been dispatched to an early grave, but Severus had agreed to share a consulship with his then ally, Clodius Albinus, the governor of Britannia. Severus then went on to defeat Pescennius Niger, the governor of Syria, and a power battle between Albinus and Severus ensued.

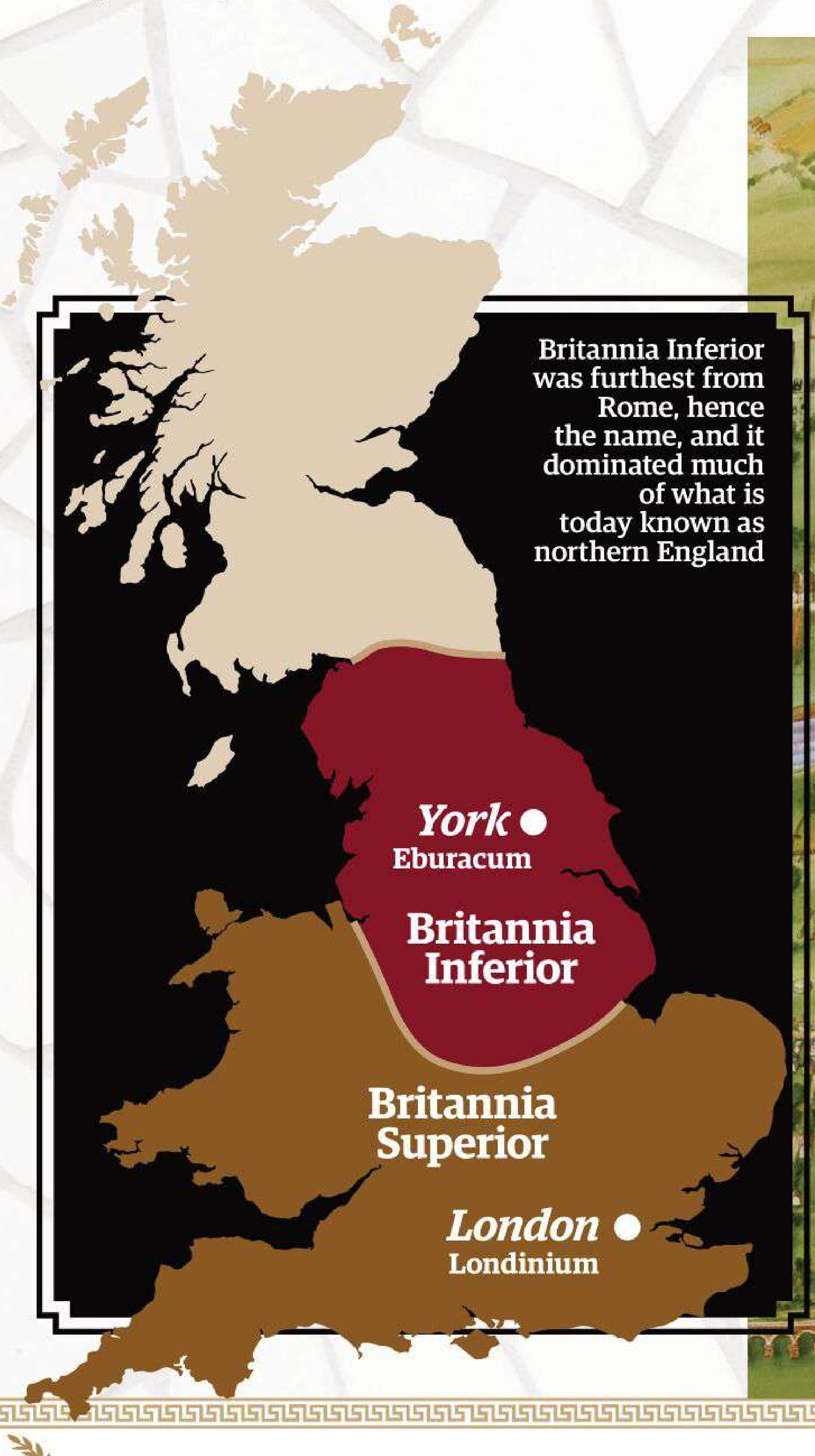
By 196 CE, Severus had declared his eldest son, Caracalla, as caesar and heir, which understandably upset Albinus. Proclaimed emperor by his troops, Albinus promptly led three legions from Britannia to Gaul with the aim of marching on Rome, but Severus foresaw his ambition and marched his troops through Germany to meet him. The two armies clashed in a huge battle involving some 300,000 men during which Albinus died.

In order to prevent future governors of Britannia from having three legions and auxiliary forces at their disposal, Severus sought to lessen the province's power by splitting it in two. Britannia Superior was to comprise the south and have Londinium (modern London) as its capital. Meanwhile, Britannia Inferior was to be formed to the north, with Eboracum (York) as its capital.

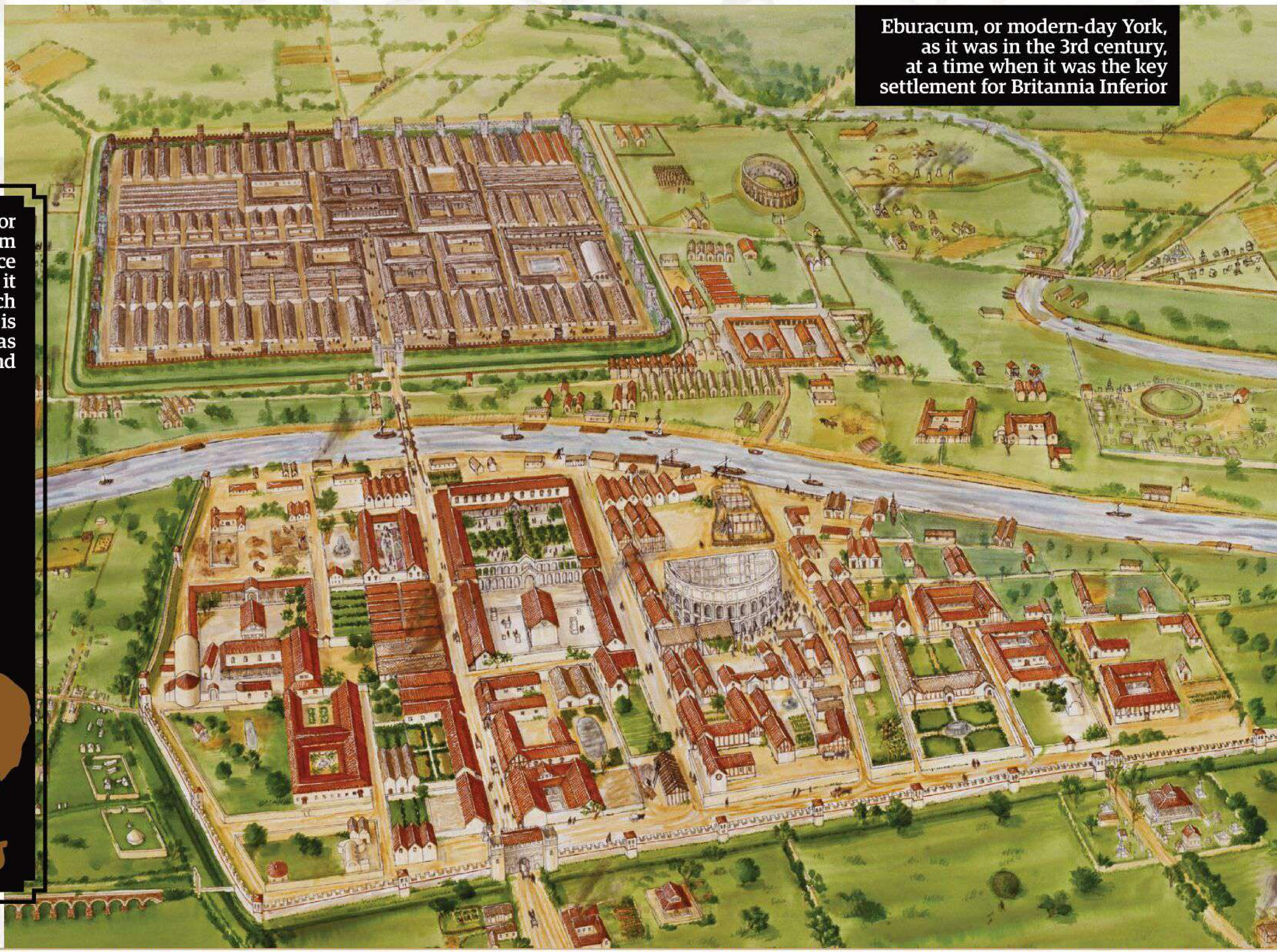
These names were typical of the structure of the Roman Empire. Provinces closer to Rome were generally given the name Superior while those further away were called Inferior. Despite the connotation of the names, Severus ended up moving to Eboracum in 208 CE in order to lead campaigns against the Caledonians, who were frequently attacking from the north. He died on 2 February 211 CE, the year the splitting of Britannia was finally set in stone, most likely under the order of Caracalla.

Britannia Superior was placed in the hands of a man of consular rank who had a couple of legions and a few auxiliaries to work with. Britannia Inferior was ruled by a man of praetorian rank who had just one legion beneath him at Eburacum and more auxiliaries, many of who guarded Hadrian's Wall. In terms of structure, Britannia Inferior is understood to have encompassed much of what we know as northern England today (Eburacum was the only town of real note in that region at the time) and Wales, with Britannia Superior absorbing the rest, including a chunk of East Anglia.

This situation lasted for a few decades, although it did not survive the 3rd century. By 296 CE, the Roman Empire was being ruled by four emperors under what was known as a tetrarchy. This was implemented by Emperor Diocletian, who sought to put an end to the chaotic instability caused by all-too-frequent assassinations of emperors: having multiple leaders, he figured, ensured the empire couldn't be hugely affected by a single death.



Britannia Inferior was furthest from Rome, hence the name, and it dominated much of what is today known as northern England



Eburacum, or modern-day York, as it was in the 3rd century, at a time when it was the key settlement for Britannia Inferior

BRITAIN

Written by
David Crookes

after a period of civil war, into separate provinces

What it couldn't protect against, however, was rebellion. When one of those emperors, Maximian, tasked the naval commander Carausius with monitoring the channel of water between Britannia and Gaul in 286 CE, the military man declared himself emperor of Britain and northern Gaul. Maximian sent his junior emperor Constantius Chlorus to reclaim Britannia. In the end, Carausius was assassinated by his treasurer, Allectus, in 293 CE.

Constantius eventually defeated Allectus, killing him in a battle close to Silchester. Britannia was then termed a diocese and eventually carved up into four provinces. Britannia Superior was split into Maxima Caesariensis and Britannia Prima, while Britannia Inferior was separated into Flavia Caesariensis and Britannia Secunda.

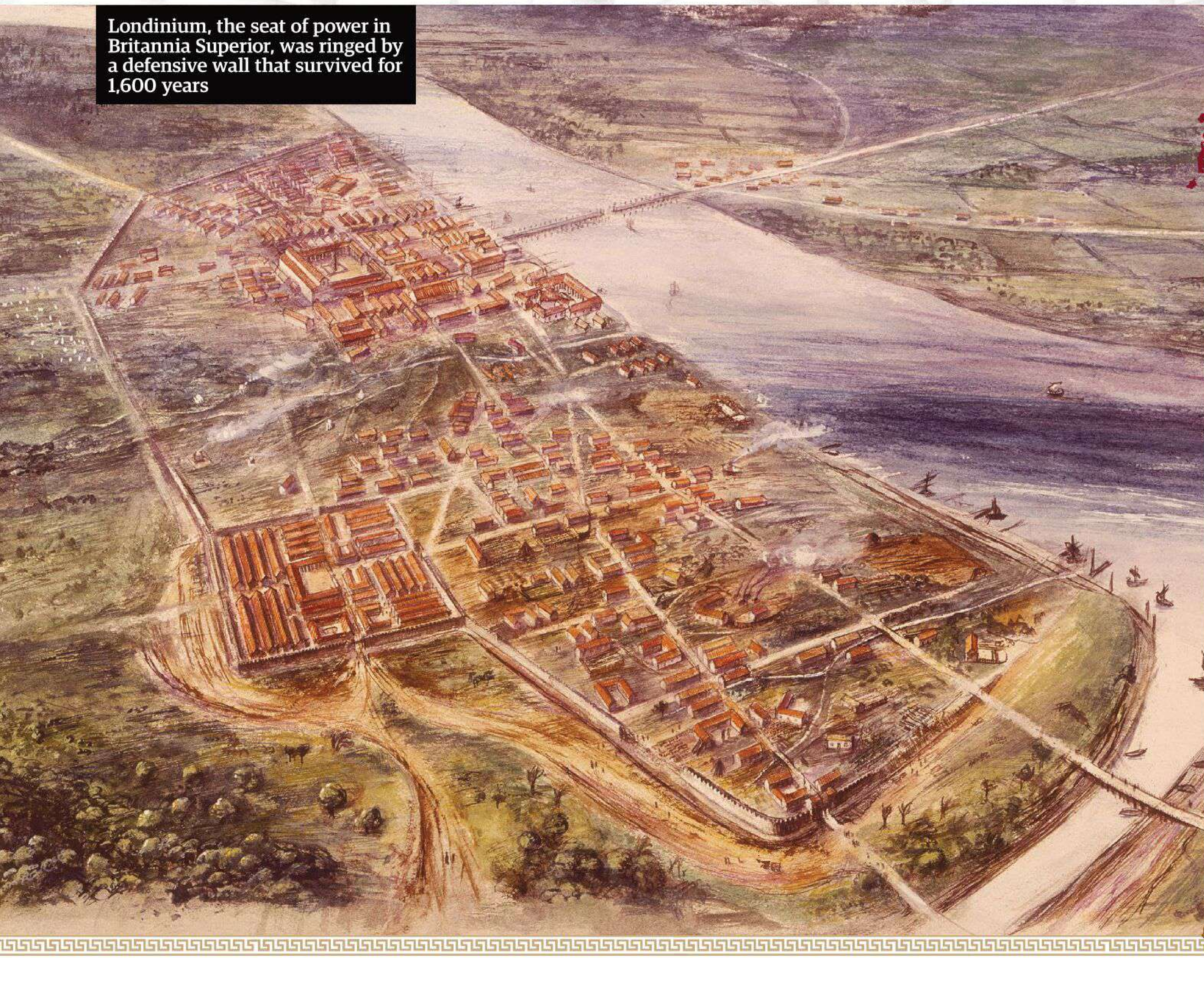
Quite how they got their names is not entirely certain. Maxima Caesariensis, which was ruled from Londinium, may have been named after either the eastern junior emperor Galerius Maximian or the western senior emperor Valerius Maximian (or maybe even both). Flavia Caesariensis is most likely after Flavius Constantius Caesar.

What is also uncertain are the exact areas each of the four provinces made up with scholars having long debated the locations and boundaries. It is generally accepted that Britannia Prima covered Wales and Cornwall as well as the lands in between, and it is thought to have been ruled from Dobunni (modern Cirencester), although it could have been Deva (modern Chester).

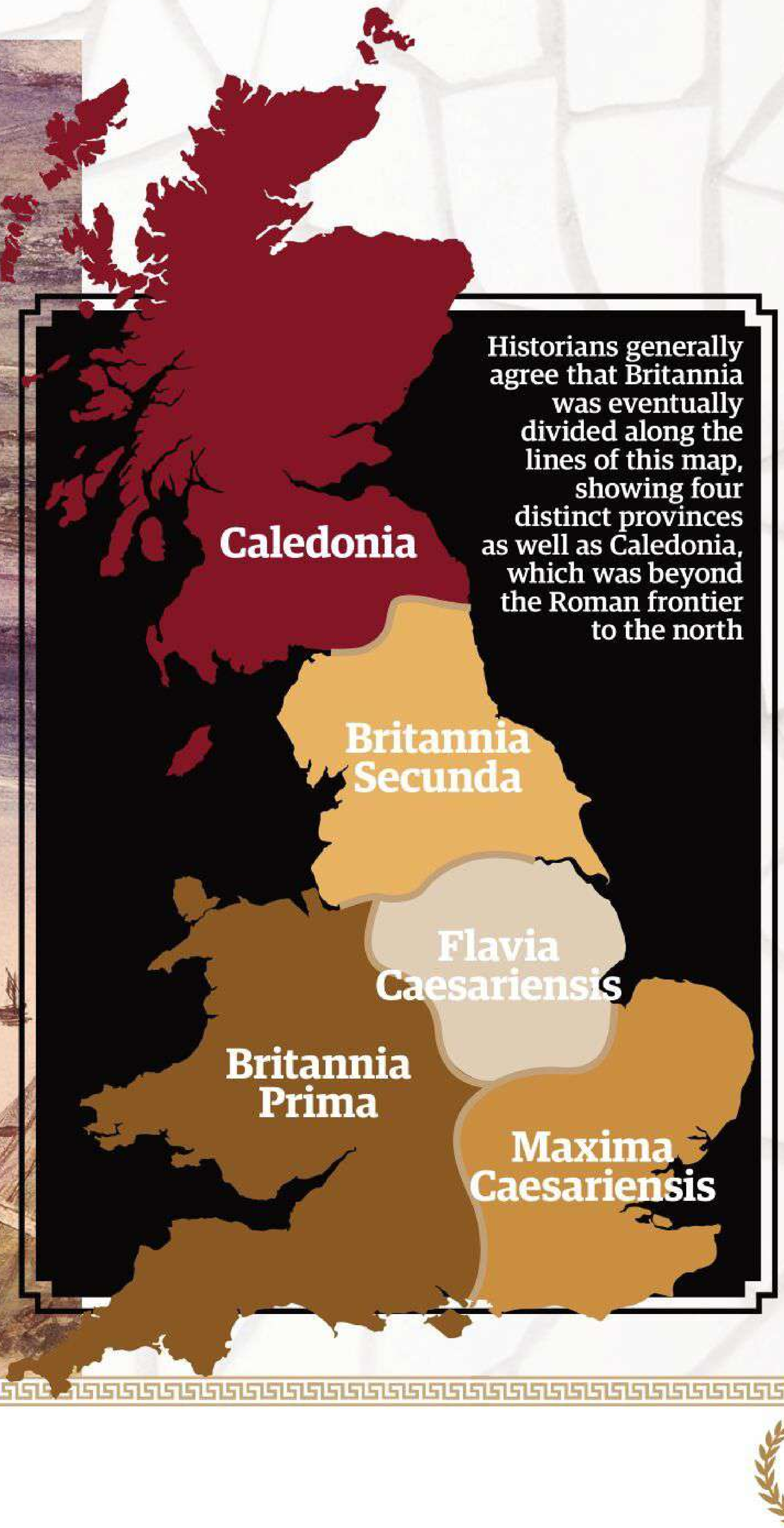
Britannia Secunda is thought to have been ruled from Eburacum, taking in what is now northern England and Yorkshire, while Flavia Caesariensis was ruled from Lindum (Lincoln), occupying the middle of what is today England in a vast area from the south of the Pennines. Whatever the boundaries were, however, the effect was a divided Britannia under the direction of a governor (called a vicarius) at a time when the number of Roman provinces across the Empire had increased. It wouldn't last.

The 4th century saw Constantine hailed as emperor by the diocese's army as well as the introduction of Christianity. In 353 CE the vicarius Flavius Martinus committed suicide after Magnentius, a usurper of the Roman Empire who attracted loyalty within the provinces of Britannia, was defeated by Constantius II. In 383 CE another vicarius, Magnus Maximus, rose from commander of Britannia to emperor (although he was killed during the Battle of the Save in 388 CE).

Most importantly, though, in 400 CE, Roman troops left Britannia to defend Italy, and Britannia sought self-management. It wasn't long before Britannia ceased to be a Roman diocese, although it has been argued (primarily by historian Roger White) that the province of Britannia Prima became the last remaining part of the Roman Empire, ending its association only when Edward I took Caernarfon in 1278.



Londinium, the seat of power in Britannia Superior, was ringed by a defensive wall that survived for 1,600 years



Historians generally agree that Britannia was eventually divided along the lines of this map, showing four distinct provinces as well as Caledonia, which was beyond the Roman frontier to the north

© Getty Images

The Crisis of the Third Century was sparked by the murder of Emperor Alexander Severus in 235, ending the Severan dynasty and launching decades of chaos

THE GALLIC EMPIRE

With Rome on its knees, a new empire was born with a dream of making Gaul, Britain and Spain safe once again

Written by Hareth Al Bustani

Following the murder of Emperor Alexander Severus in 235 CE, the Roman Empire was thrown into chaos. In the ensuing 50 years, there were more than 25 claimants to the throne – most of whom were violently overthrown. The period, known as the Crisis of the Third Century, peaked in 260, when Emperor Valerian foolishly allowed himself to be captured by the emboldened Persian king Shapur I. His son and co-ruler, Gallienus, who had been left to defend the western frontiers, inherited a precarious realm on the verge of total collapse.

Along the Rhine and Danube, Gallienus had proved himself brilliant, staving off the Franks and Alemanni alongside the rebels Ingenuus and Regalianus. However, he was unprepared for the anarchy to come, as the empire was assaulted on all sides. The Alemanni pushed into Italy, the Franks laid waste as far as Spain and the Goths ravaged Greece, Macedonia, Pontus and Asia Minor. Before long, people were talking; Gallienus, they said, had been made frivolous by his power, indulging himself in gardening and poetry at the moment he was needed most.

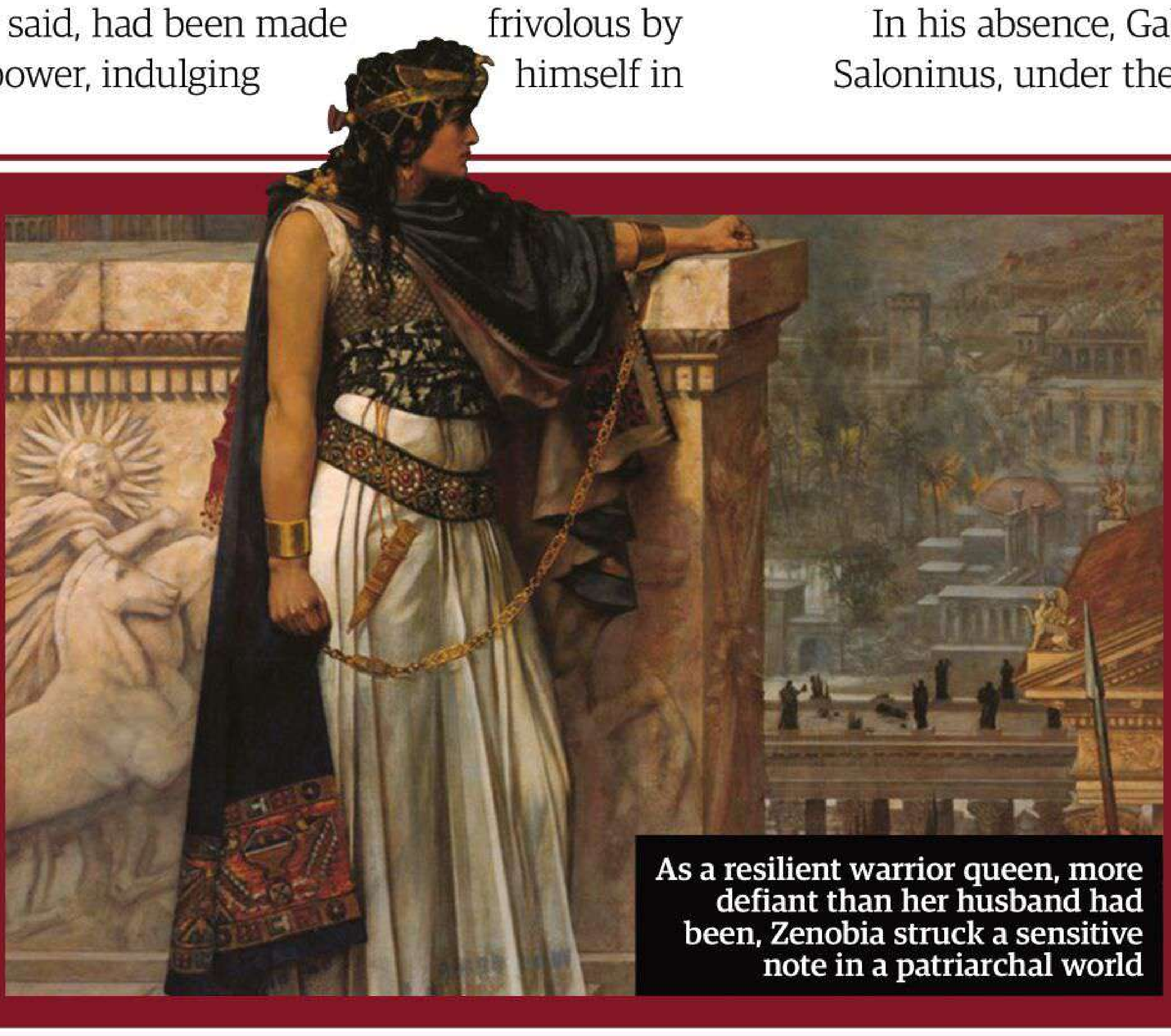
Meanwhile, in Gaul, a Batavian general called Postumus was declared emperor by his men. Born in obscurity, he had forged himself in the fire of war, becoming an inspirational leader, a masterful strategist and a bold innovator. He was a Roman's Roman, one who had clawed his way up the ranks and won the hearts and minds of his fellow Gauls. Repeatedly he repelled the rapacious Franks, earning himself the name the Conqueror of the Germans and Saviour of Gaul.

The governor of Germania Inferior, he suffered neither the trappings of vanity nor fools. However, he was not only a man of valour but also cunning. Acting as consul, when he caught some Juthungian raiders making off with Roman loot and captives he chased them down, put them to the sword and handed their booty to his men. His exploits were celebrated with the Augsburg Altar, erected to mark his subjugation of Rhaetia.

In his absence, Gallienus had left his son, Saloninus, under the watch of his trusted general Silvanus in Agrippina (modern-day Cologne), the most prominent city on the Rhine. When Silvanus heard about Postumus' plunder, he demanded he hand it over. Postumus conveyed this to his men, stirring them up until nothing but blood could quench their outrage. Seizing the moment, he made straight for Agrippina, laying siege to the settlement and making it clear he would starve every single man until Saloninus was handed over – which he promptly was, along with Silvanus. Both men were subsequently killed. Now mighty Postumus ruled alone in Gaul.

When Gallienus learned of his son's death he immediately prepared a retaliation. However, simultaneously, his father's crippled former treasurer had just declared his sons, Macrianus and Quietus, joint emperors in the East. The popular duo caused such an uproar that Gallienus was forced to dispatch an army towards Asia Minor to deal with them, leaving his own stretched thin.

After some open skirmishes, Gallienus pinned Postumus down, besieging a Gallic city. However, the Gauls defended fiercely, keeping the invaders



As a resilient warrior queen, more defiant than her husband had been, Zenobia struck a sensitive note in a patriarchal world

A BREAKAWAY QUEEN

The Palmyrene prince Odaenathus had proven himself Rome's saviour in the East. However, when he was assassinated in 267 CE power fell to his widow, Zenobia, who was acting as regent for her son.

While Odaenathus was loyal to the Romans, Zenobia was decidedly less happy beneath their yoke. Thanks to its strategic location along a major trade route, the city of Palmyra had become incredibly wealthy; its architectural marvels were said to rival those of Rome itself. With an army of 70,000, she seized Syria, Egypt, Anatolia and Northern Arabia – thereby founding the Palmyrene Empire.

Her realm was a cosmopolitan one, where Greek, Roman and Syrian culture converged, and Pagans, Jews and Christians lived side by side. She famously protected the Bishop of Antioch, Paul of Samosata, who was repeatedly denounced as a heretic.

When Aurelian rose to power, despite some initial difficulty, he rapidly pushed Zenobia's army back into Palmyra and soon captured her. He later razed the city to the ground and paraded Zenobia around in chains. Historians differ on her fate – some say she was killed, but most likely she retired to a villa in Rome to live out the rest of her days a subject.

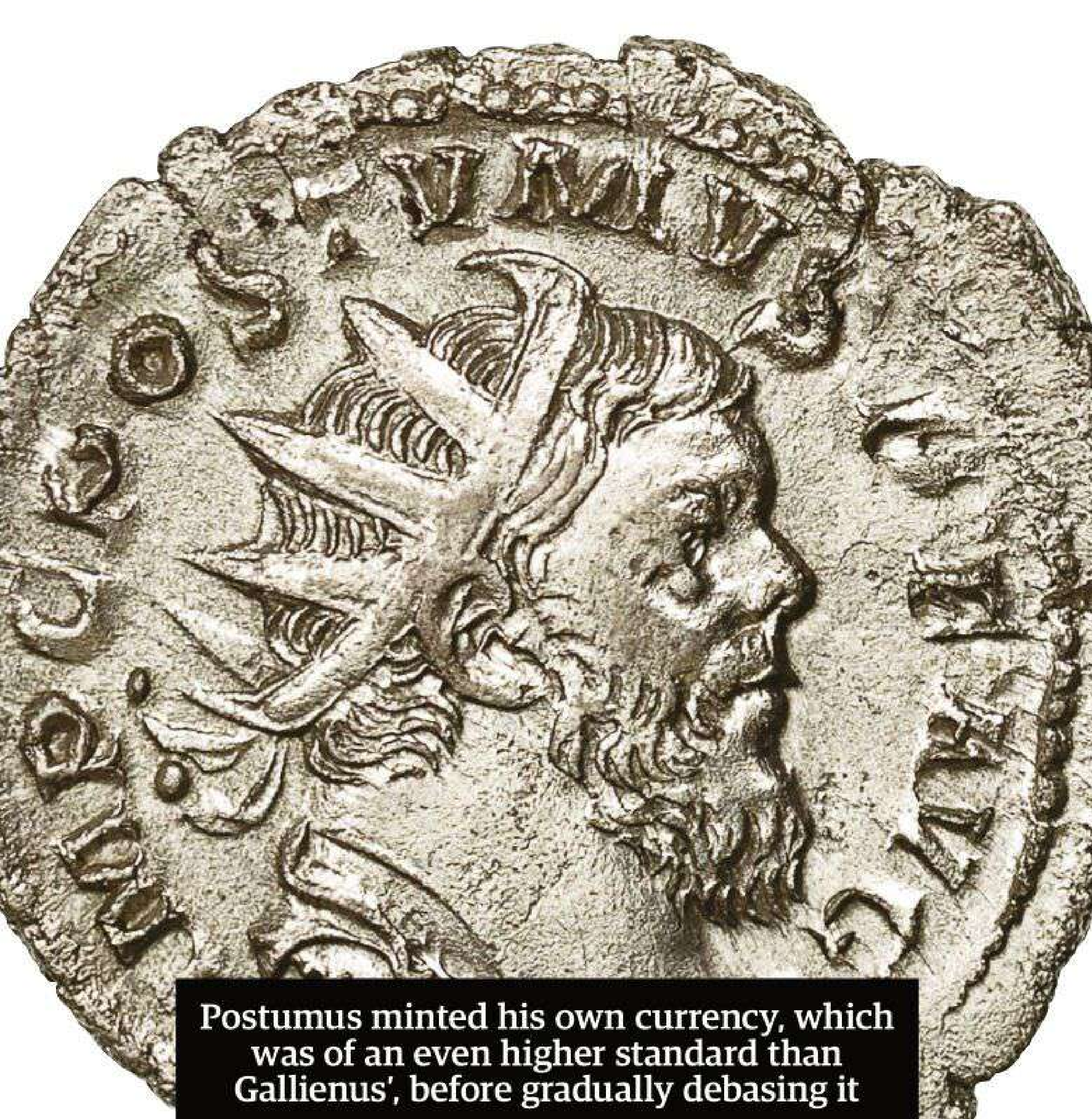
Valerian's capture at the hands of Shapur not only sentenced him to a miserable life but an ignominious death in Persia

Prior to his father's capture, Gallienus displayed diplomatic and military brilliance in his campaigns along the Rhine and Danube

at bay. Desperate to find a way in, Gallienus himself snuck around, receiving an arrow in the side for his trouble. After falling ill he was forced to retreat, giving the Gallic Empire the breathing room it needed. It was a huge blow to the emperor's prestige and the confirmation Postumus needed.

It was now apparent that, with the Franks ravaging Spain, and the British under attack both from the northern barbarians and those on the continent, their security was not a priority to the central government. Instead, they turned to Postumus, recognising him as the true emperor of Rome. Rather than march on Rome, however, he shored up support by fortifying the Rhine and the English coast.

Having acquired the Romans' silver mines in Britain and Spain, he then proceeded to legitimise his authority by minting his own coins. On the periphery of the empire, Gaul and Britain typically suffered from coin shortages, and older coins of the Antonines were still widely circulated. The Gallic Empire set about rectifying this, minting archaic sestertii, along with new coins that hailed Postumus as the 'Restorer of the Gauls' raising a kneeling woman. Some of his coins were among the finest Roman currency ever produced. The empire elected its own senators to preside over various provinces, and even consuls such as Censor and Lepidus.



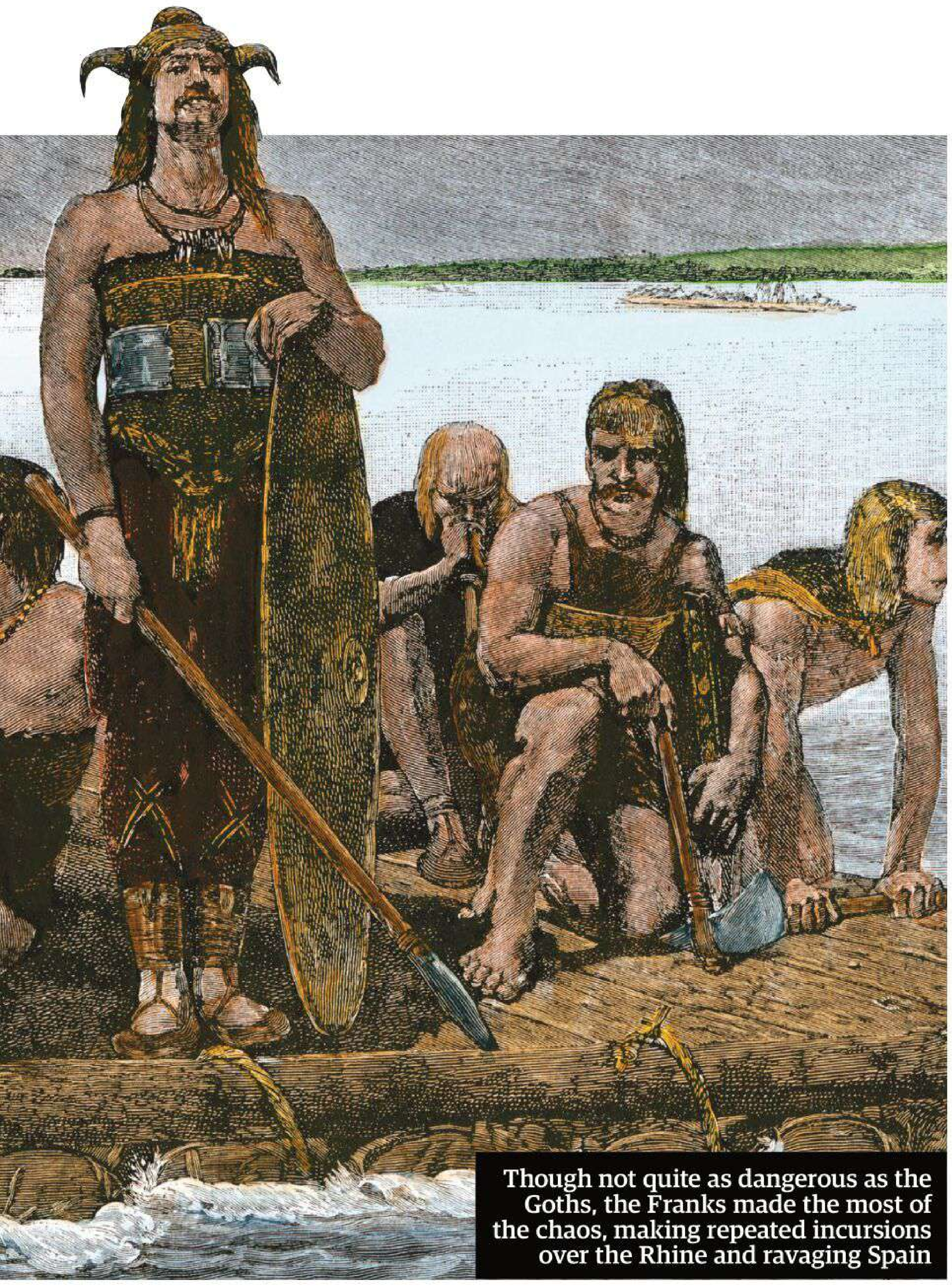
Postumus minted his own currency, which was of an even higher standard than Gallienus', before gradually debasing it

Simultaneously, Gallienus' eastern ally, the Palmyrene Odaenathus, had crushed the Macrianii with the help of a general called Aureolus. Over the course of his career, Aureolus had become one of Gallienus' most reliable men. However, when Odaenathus was murdered in the east, leaving Dacia vulnerable to the Goths, he too decided to rebel, seizing the city of Milan. At first, rather than proclaiming himself emperor, he minted coins supporting Postumus' claim, but when he realised the Gallic emperor was ignoring him he had no choice but to declare for himself – though Gallienus had little trouble quashing and confining him.

In 268, surrounded by enemies on all sides like so many before him, Gallienus was murdered in his camp in the midst of a false alarm. He was replaced by Claudius II, to whom Aureolus surrendered, only to be murdered in the process. Having reformed the army, seeking to return discipline and dignity to the Roman martial character, Claudius prioritised the defence of his realm. Following the death of Odaenathus, his wife, the Palmyrene queen Zenobia, had declared independence, leaving Claudius with but a third of the previous Roman Empire. However, there was a far more pressing issue at hand – the Goths were building a fleet of thousands of ships, capable of carrying, at his estimation, 370,000 warriors, to Byzantium.

Despite relative external peace, all was not well in the Gallic Empire. The next year, just after celebrating his tenth year in power and fifth consulship, Postumus put down a rebellion in Mainz led by one of his top generals. However, after refusing to let his men plunder the city, they murdered him. He was replaced by a metalworker called Marius, who was himself assassinated just months later. His successor, Victorinus, had previously shared Postumus' fourth consulship and served as the Gallic praetorian tribune. However, in temperament he stood in direct contrast to Postumus. Famously licentious, he was killed in his second year of power by a jealous husband whose wife he had tried to seduce. The avenger even murdered Victorinus' son, leaving the realm in the hands of his mother, Victoria.

Having restored some calm to the Gallic realm, Victoria nominated Tetricus to rule in her name from the city of Trier. For her efforts she was named Augusta and Mother of the Camps, with gold, silver and copper


Though not quite as dangerous as the Goths, the Franks made the most of the chaos, making repeated incursions over the Rhine and ravaging Spain

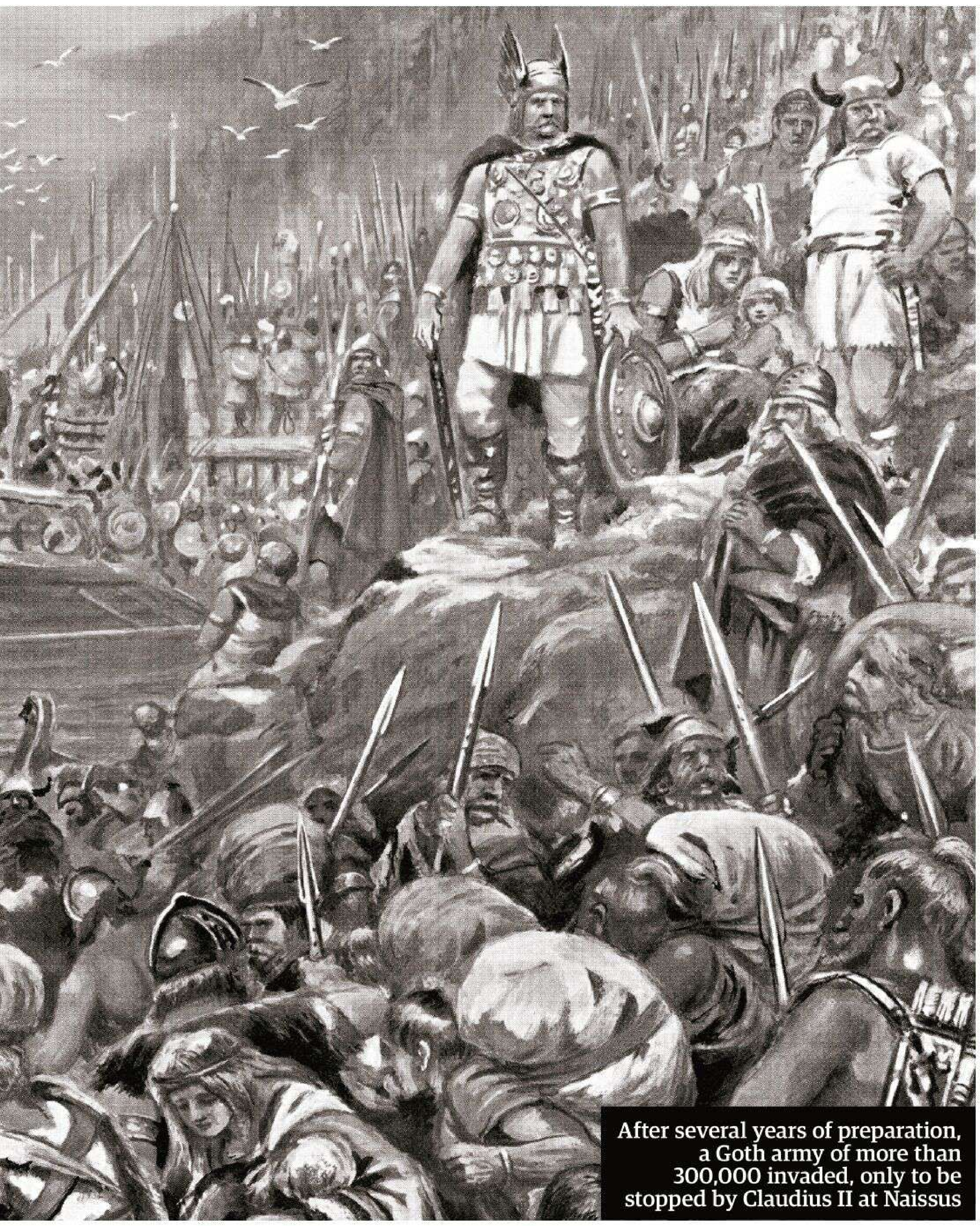
coins minted in her likeness. Tetricus had previously served as the governor of Aquitaine, a post that required little martial vigour. He came to resent the position he was thrust into, presiding over a realm that had descended into debauchery since the death of Postumus, and desperately sought a way out. Though by the end of his reign Postumus had begun debasing his currency, this had since spiralled, and even unofficial counterfeit mints were tolerated. All along the Rhine the Germans were invading, and Tetricus could do little but abandon his frontier forts.

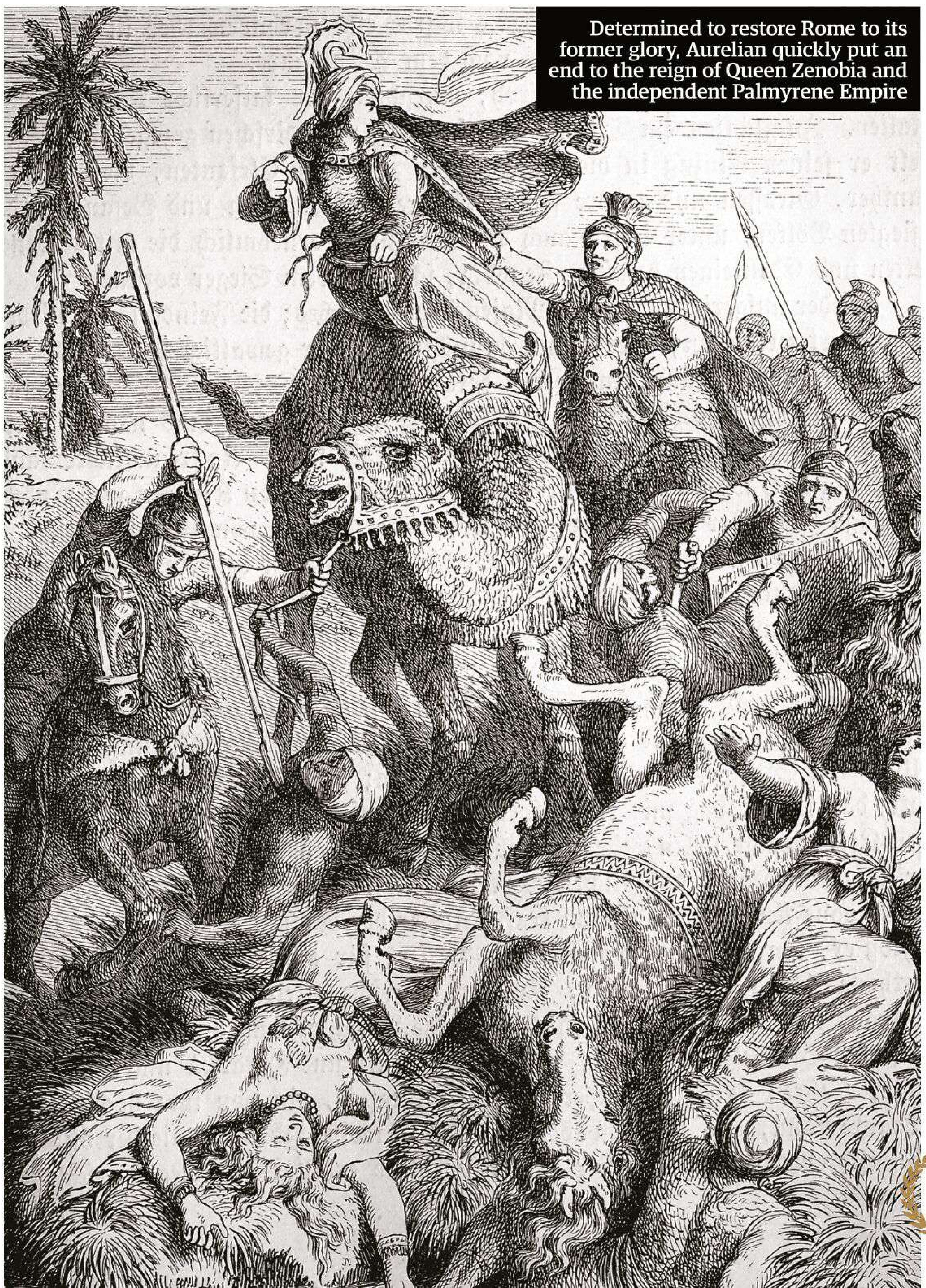
Eastwards, after decisively wiping out the Goths at the Battle of Naissus, Claudius – now dubbed Claudius Gothicus for his efforts – died of the plague, but not before nominating Aurelian as his successor, who promptly reconquered the Palmyrene Empire in the east. While most of Gaul and Britain still recognised Gallic rule, Spain had grown disillusioned by the lack of commitment to its defence, choosing to recognise the rising emperor Aurelian instead of Tetricus. Strasbourg also pledged itself to Aurelian.

At great risk, Tetricus secretly wrote to Aurelian, seeking an escape from the burden of empire, imploring him to offer a way out. He conspired against the Gallic Empire, seeming to wage war on the Romans only to undermine his army at every turn. He purposefully positioned his men disadvantageously and betrayed their movements to the Romans. When the two sides met for a final confrontation in Champagne, Tetricus simply snuck off. Despite the betrayal from the very top, his men fought valiantly, with guts and fury down to the last man. Though the death of Postumus had derailed their empire, their passion for independence had not been extinguished. As soon as it was over, with Gaul defeated, Britain was all too happy to declare for Aurelian.

Having finally reunited the Roman Empire, Aurelian returned as Restitutor Orbis – Restorer of the World. He held a great triumph, parading Tetricus and Zenobia in humiliation – though both were later released. For his troubles Aurelian made Tetricus a senator and (according to some historical sources) the governor of Italy.

The next year Aurelian completed his pacification of Gaul, before setting off for Byzantium to make war with the Persians. He would never reach his destination for he was murdered during the journey, making way for yet another decade of chaos until Diocletian emerged to finally restore order to the empire.


After several years of preparation, a Goth army of more than 300,000 invaded, only to be stopped by Claudius II at Naissus


Determined to restore Rome to its former glory, Aurelian quickly put an end to the reign of Queen Zenobia and the independent Palmyrene Empire

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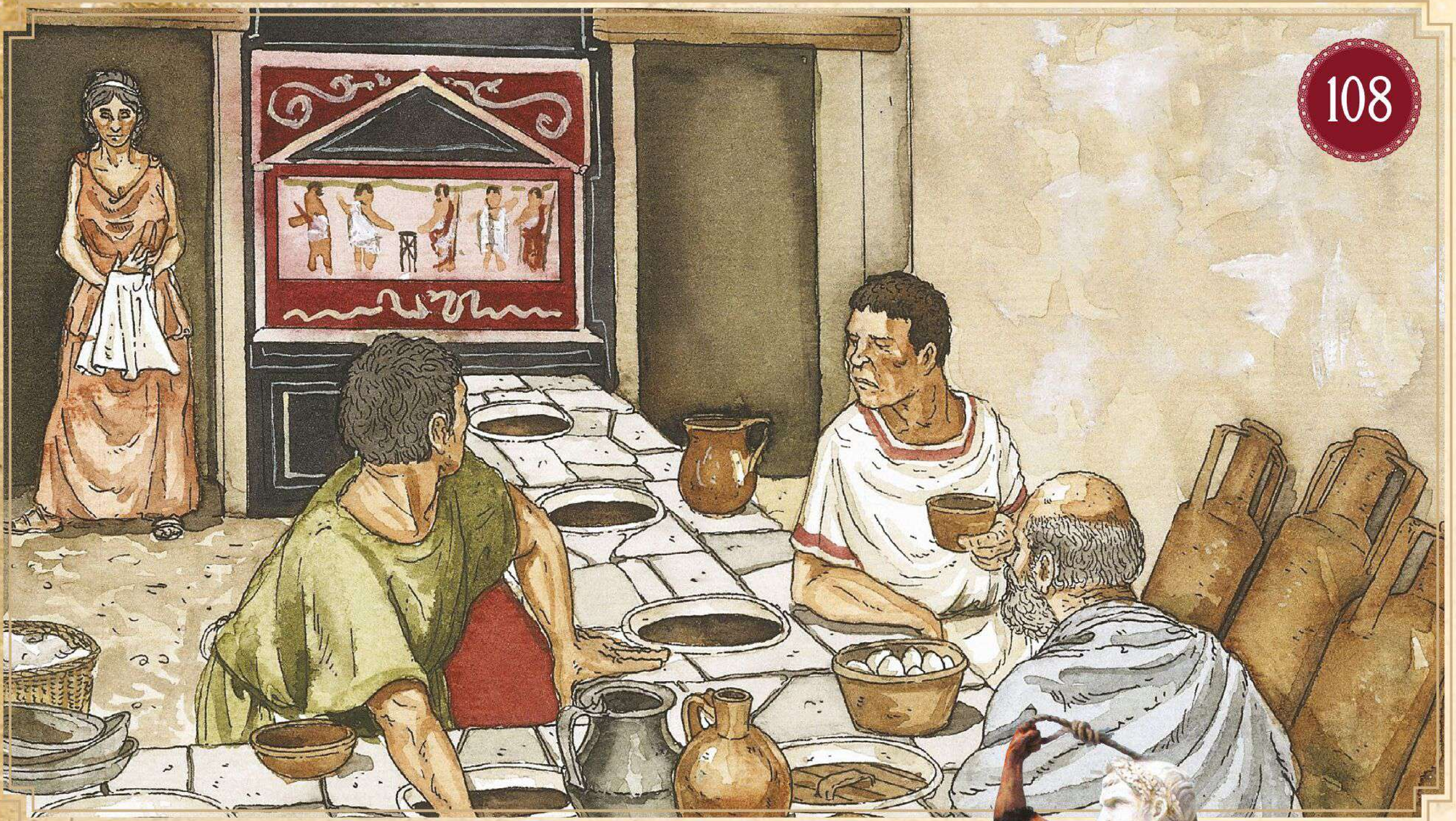
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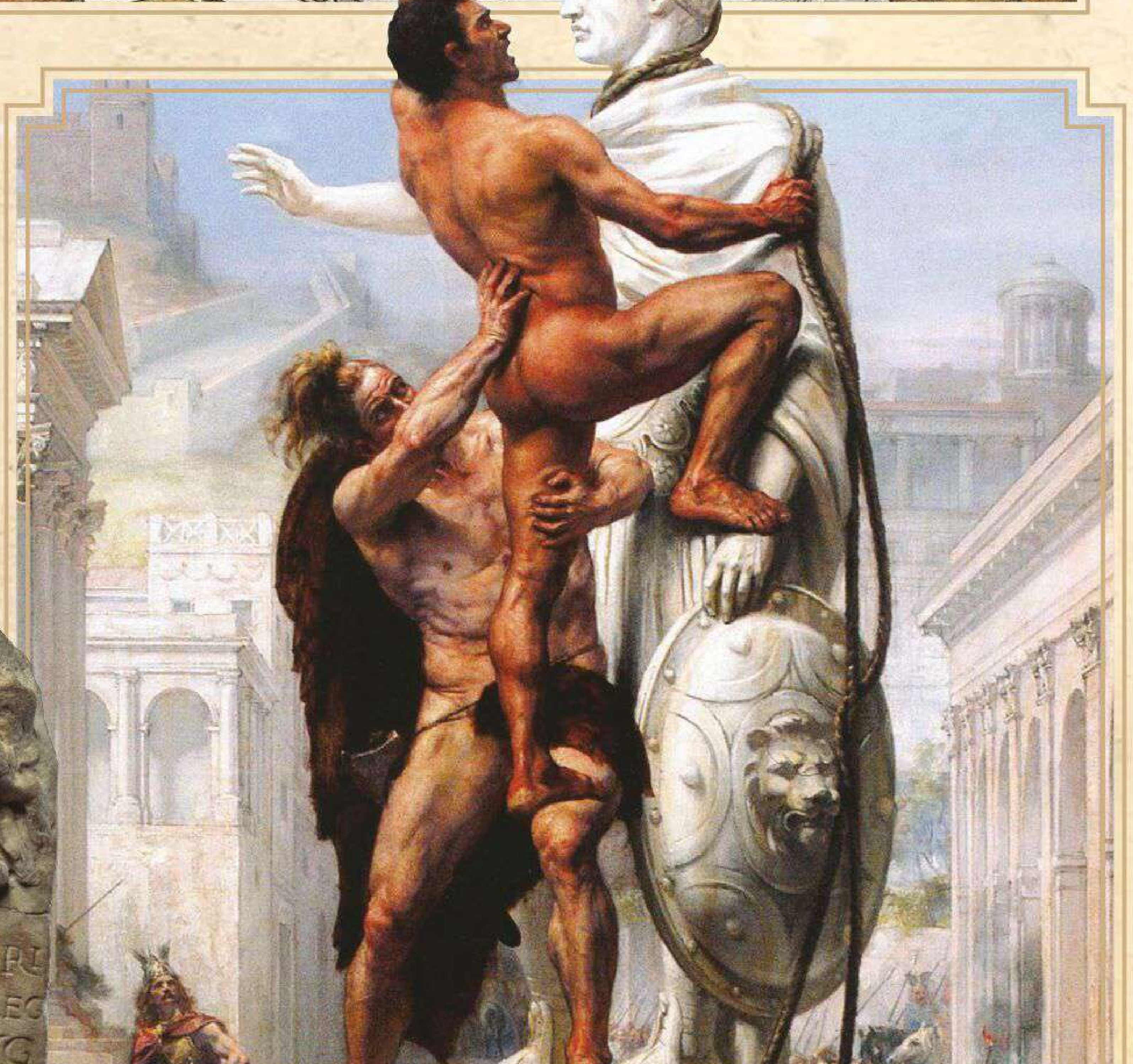
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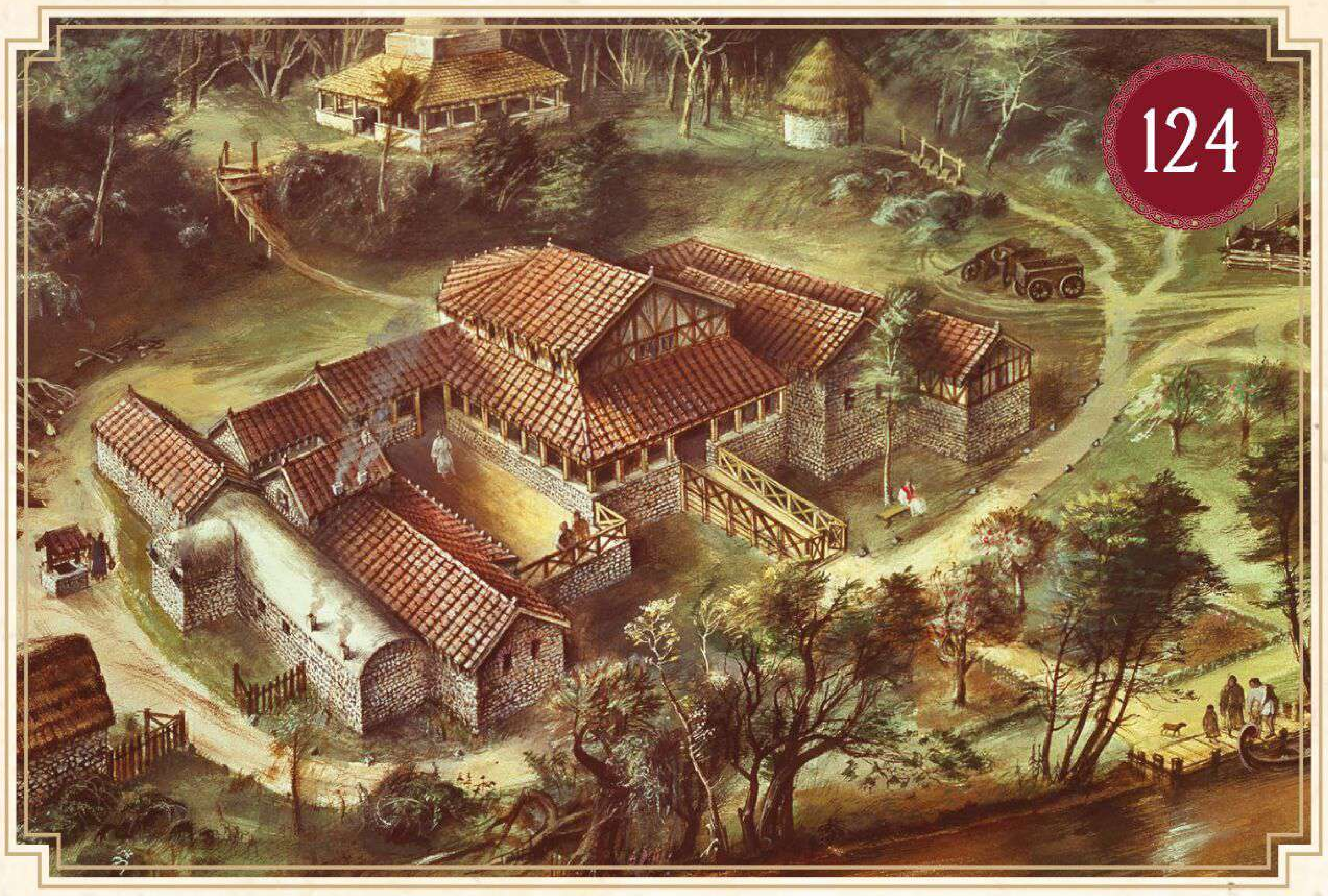

LIFE & SOCIETY

As Roman culture spread throughout Britannia, the island was changed forever – and then, suddenly, the Romans left...

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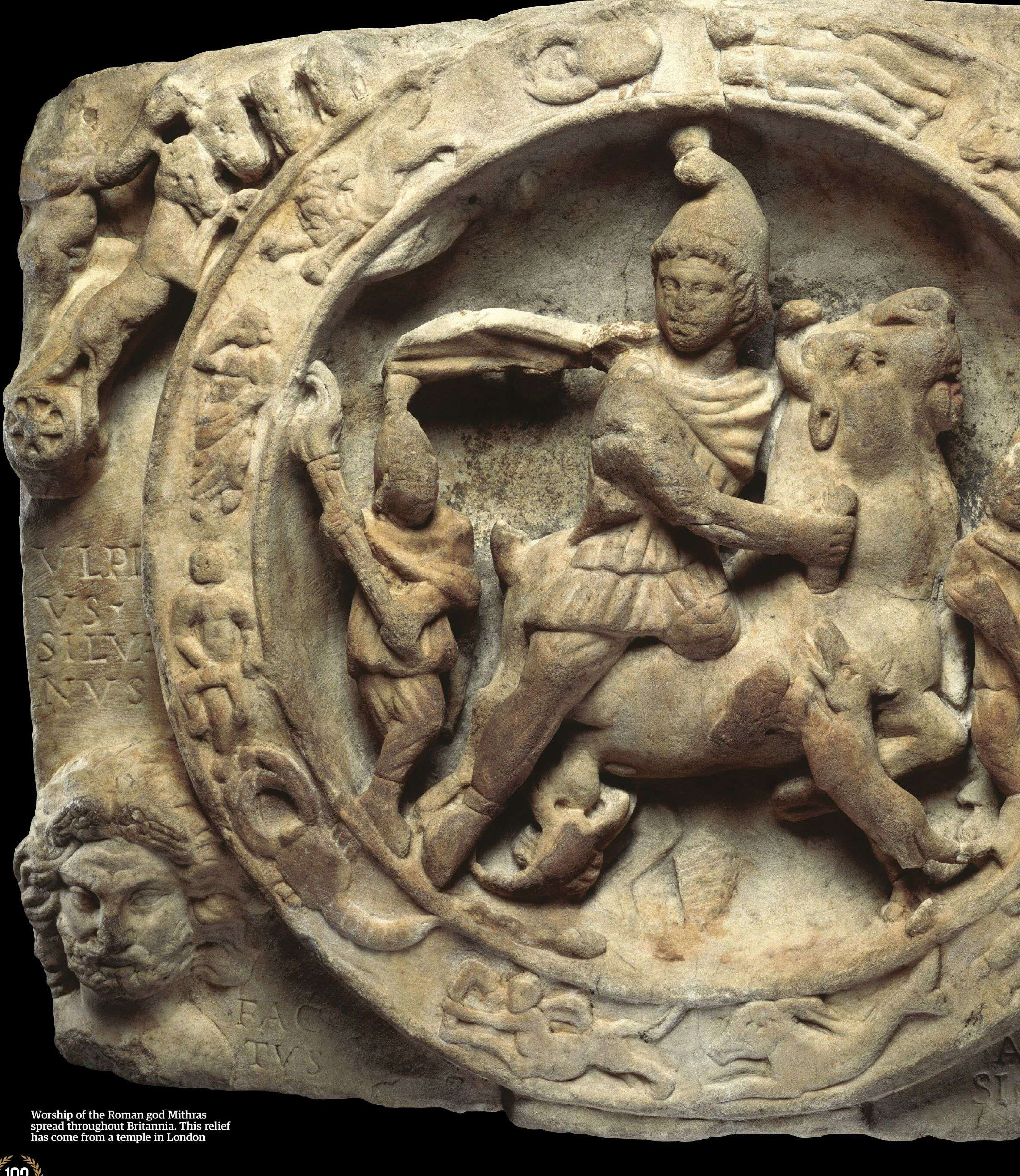
VLPI
VS
SILVA
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Worship of the Roman god Mithras spread throughout Britannia. This relief has come from a temple in London

EIMERI
TVS·LEG
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VOTVM
SOLVIT
RAV

SACRED BRITAIN

As the Romans swept across the region, they brought their gods and rituals with them

Written by **Miranda Aldhouse-Green**

Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. Nonetheless, efforts to fathom what was going on in terms of religious beliefs in Iron Age Britain are not easy, principally both because its inhabitants were non-literate, thus leaving no record of their attitudes to the spiritual world, and because of the dearth of images of divine beings. There are a few scattered classical literary references to sacred rites on this remote island beyond Ocean (the great river believed by the Greeks and Romans to encircle the 'civilised' world). But these need to be treated with caution because such comments are loaded with a deadly mixture of ignorance and bias towards 'barbarians'. Any notion of identifying anything resembling a pre-Roman Iron Age pantheon is doomed to failure.

However, to be set against the paucity of data associated with Iron Age gods, there is a growing body of rich evidence for ritual practices and practitioners, particularly in the late Iron Age. In the 50s BCE, Julius Caesar commented, with a certain grudging admiration, on the high status and influence of the druidic priesthood. While he wrote principally about Gaul, which he conquered and governed for nigh on a decade, he said something telling about the druids – namely that they were reputed to have had their origins in Britain and spread to Gaul. He may have picked up this information on one of his two brief visits to Britain in 55 and 54 BCE.

Any evidence for Iron Age British druids has to be circumstantial. But the complexity of ritual behaviour in Britannia before the Claudian Invasion of 43 CE suggests the presence of professional ritualists whose role was to tap into and negotiate with the spirit world by orchestrating sacred events, such as divination

Brief Bio

MIRANDA ALDHOUSE-GREEN is Emeritus Professor of Archaeology at Cardiff University. Her new book *Sacred Britannia: The Gods and Rituals of Roman Britain* was published by Thames and Hudson in June 2018.

(discerning the will of the gods) and the giving of votive gifts, such as deposits of weapons, precious jewellery (like the sumptuous gold torcs buried at Snettisham in Norfolk in the 70s BCE) and other high-status objects hidden and hoarded in water or pits. And some of these British priests left behind them fragments of their liturgical regalia, in the shape of sceptres and headdresses. As early as the 4th century BCE, a priest died and his remains were buried with a splendidly decorated ritual crown on a remote site at Cerrig-y-Drudion in north Wales.

> “As well as the official state deities, there is a plethora of spirits to whom people appealed for help in their lives”

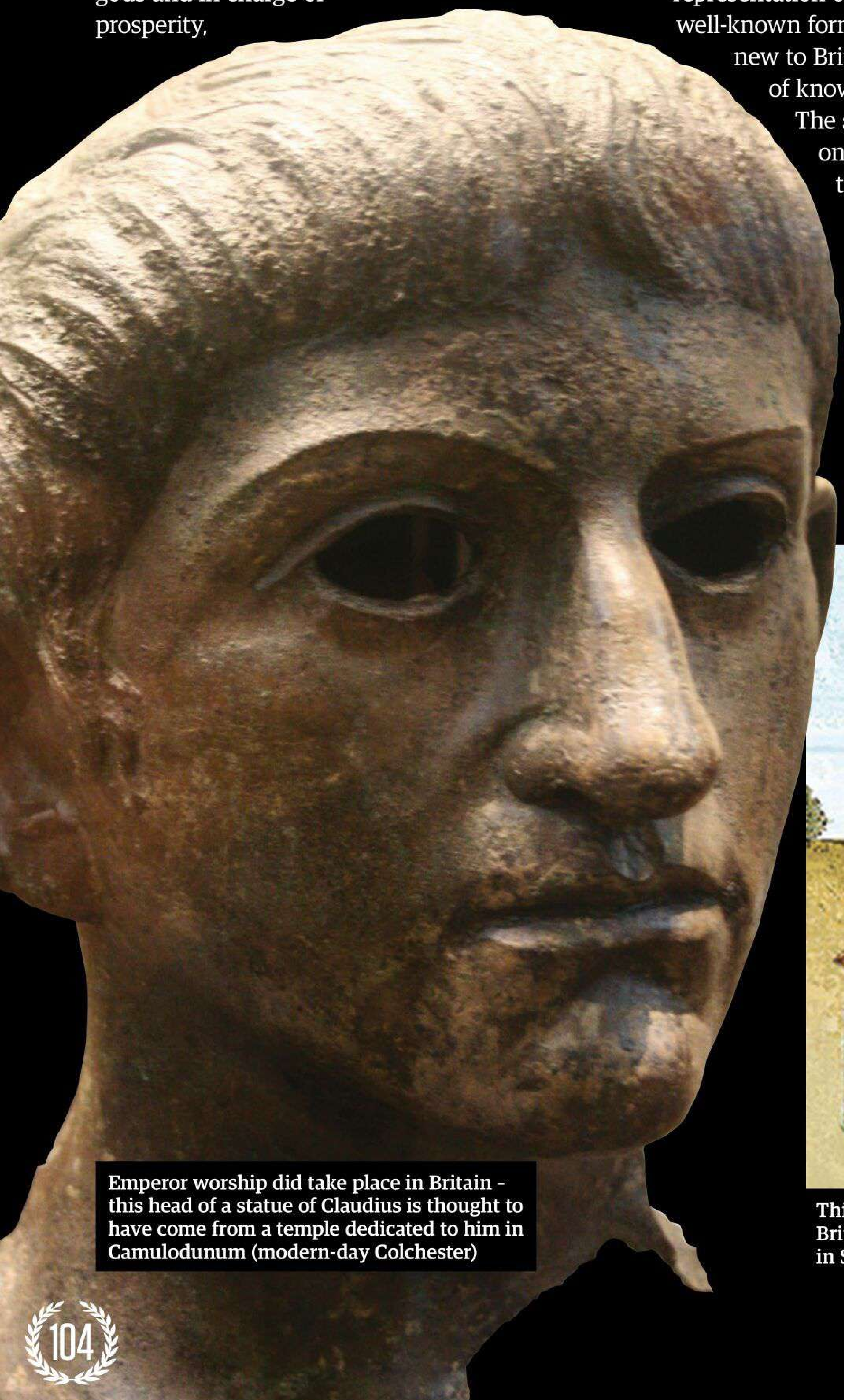
If the gods of Iron Age Britain appear as formless, shadowy and nameless, this changes when the emperor Claudius decided to add the ‘wild west’ land of Britannia to his huge imperial domain. For in the Roman (as in the Greek) world, the spirit realm was a highly structured pantheon of divinities, each of whom had specific roles and functions. At the top of the divine hierarchy of state gods, Jupiter, lord of the sky, ruled them all; Mars was principally a god of war, Diana of hunting and the Moon, Mercury, the herald of the gods and in charge of prosperity, Minerva goddess of wisdom and craft, and so on. As well as these official state deities, there is a plethora of spirits to whom people appealed for help in all aspects of their lives. When the Roman army marched into southeast Britain in 43 CE, it brought the gods of Rome along, but many of these soldiers had been recruited in the provinces and so they also took with them the gods of their homelands, whether they were from Gaul, Spain or further afield.

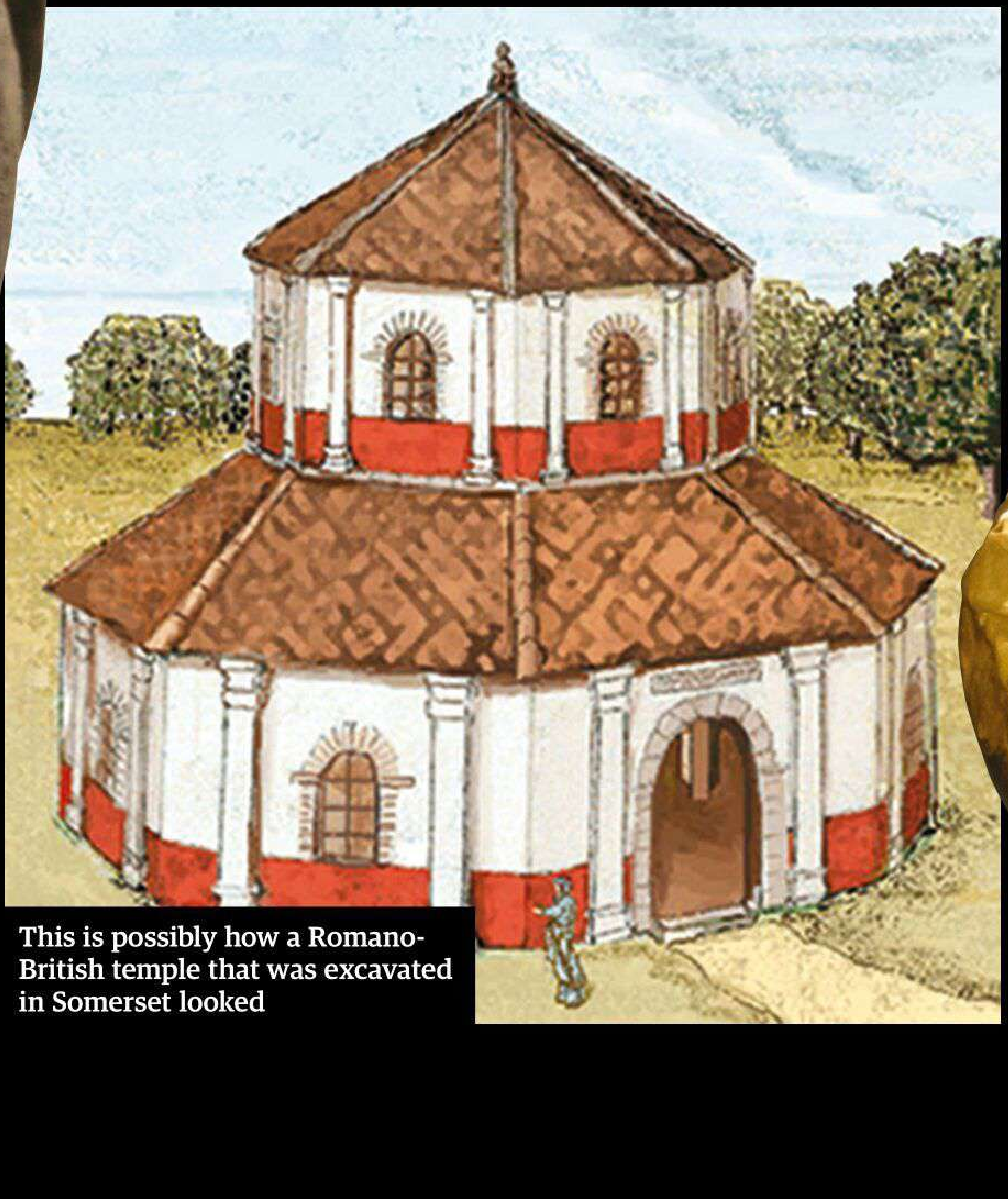
The multifarious gods that were introduced to Britain by the Roman army were clearly identifiable because of two key features of religious expression: epigraphy (the Roman habit of writing the names of divinities, often with messages to them from supplicants, on stone, metal or pottery) and iconography (the representation of gods in human or another well-known form). Both these traditions were new to Britannia, and provide a rich seam of knowledge about ritual and belief. The state gods and the more minor ones were imported wholesale by the Roman military. Among the most prominent were Jupiter, Mars, Mercury and Minerva. But towering above all these was the Imperial Cult, the worship of the spirit of the reigning emperor, and this was not so much a matter of religious belief but of fealty to the Empire and its ruler.

But far more interesting was the way in which the Britons received, and sometimes adapted these foreign deities. When the great spa-temple was built in Bath in the 1st century CE, its Roman deity, Minerva, was conflated with the native presiding goddess Sulis, the personification of the hot springs. And, on Hadrian’s Wall, army units set up altars to their chief god, Jupiter Best and Greatest, but sometimes, on the side or back, a wheel-motif was carved, in acknowledgement of a popular Gallo-British solar deity, whose identifying symbol (referenced in the Iron Age by the presence of this motif on amulets and on coins) this was.

The British manipulation and adaptation of foreign gods did have its counterpoint, for it is clear from inscriptions and images that Roman military men took the trouble to find out from the locals who their gods were, in order to ensure that they were venerated, in the hope that such actions would serve to protect alien soldiers who built forts on the land over which these spirits presided. Antenociticus, worshipped at the wall fort of Benwell, was one such British deity who had a temple built to him by Roman forces.

What is more, images of gods strange to Rome but apparently native to Britain (and Gaul) seem to have found a ‘voice’, a tangible identity because of the new ways of expressing them, on inscriptions and in iconography. How else should we explain the hugely popular cult of Epona, the horse-goddess who, despite her Gallo-British roots, was adopted with enthusiasm by Roman cavalrymen, as a protector of both mounted soldiers and their horses? She is typically depicted as a draped female figure riding side-saddle, or sitting between


Emperor worship did take place in Britain – this head of a statue of Claudius is thought to have come from a temple dedicated to him in Camulodunum (modern-day Colchester)


This is possibly how a Romano-British temple that was excavated in Somerset looked

two ponies. And Britishness laid its hand upon Romanitas in other ways, most notably in imposing surreality on imagery; this is clearly exemplified at Maryport in Cumbria, where Roman soldiers worshipped a war-god but, instead of Mars in full military regalia, he appears as a naked, ithyphallic figure, brandishing a spear and shield and wearing a pair of very un-Mars-like horns.

Some of the most influential cults absorbed by the Roman Empire were those of the oriental world: Egypt, Syria and Persia. Of these, most popular among the higher echelons was the Persian cult of Mithras, a god of light who was engaged in an everlasting struggle against the forces of evil and darkness. Mithraism spread all over the Empire, including Britannia, and mithraea (temples to Mithras) were built in major cities and in military installations. New finds are extending our knowledge of this 'secret' men-only religion: at Caerleon, fragments of clay altars with holes for candles were used to illuminate the subterranean, cave-like shrines to Mithras. And the recent discovery of a mithraeum at Inveresk on the Antonine Wall in Scotland indicates how far this merit-based cult spread even in the northernmost region of the Empire.

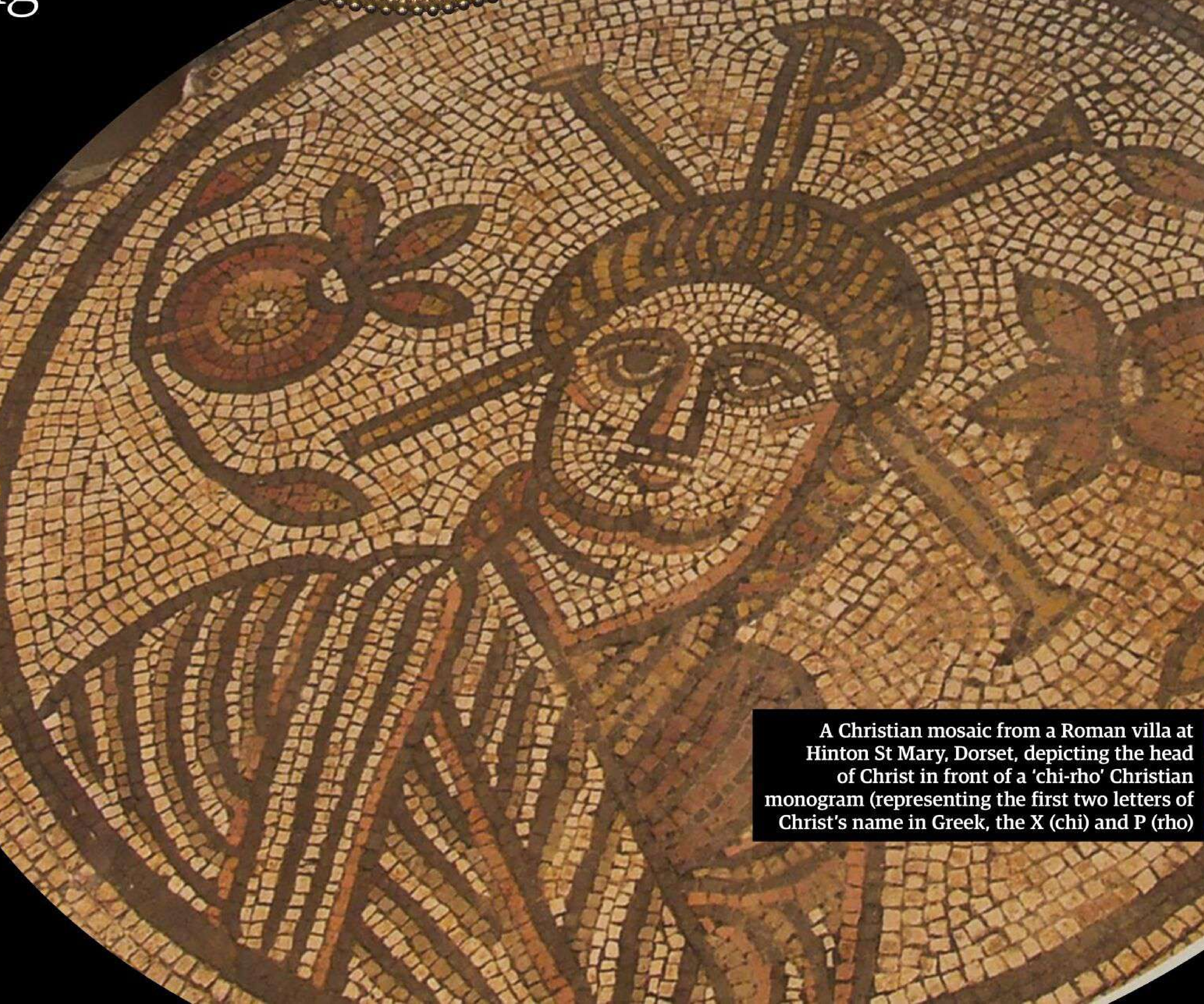
Britannia was also home to the fledgling monotheistic Christian religion, probably from the 2nd or 3rd century CE. House-churches at Roman villas were decorated with Christian mosaic pavements (as at Hinton St Mary and Frampton, Dorset) or frescoes (at Lullingstone, Kent). But perhaps the most interesting find, made in 1975, was a hoard of rich silver and gold liturgical plate from a church built in the reign of Constantine, the first Christian emperor, in the early 4th century CE. In addition to a chalice, bowls, platters and a flagon, the cache contained several little sheet-silver feather-shaped plaques, marked in gold with the Christian 'chi-rho' motif. Plaques like this were commonly offered by supplicants to pagan temples, and it looks as though such familiar objects were deliberately 'Christianised' by the clergy at Water Newton in order, perhaps, to entice devotees away from paganism to Christ. But the burial of this hoard of silverware was an act of secret concealment, hidden, in all likelihood, from the persecutors of the new Christian religion.

> "Persian Mithraism spread all over the Empire, including to Britannia"

This statue of Mars Ultor was found in Balbuidy, which lies on the Antonine Wall

Silver dish from a hoard of precious metalwork buried in the 4th century CE, found at Mildenhall Suffolk: the central roundel depicts the head of Bacchus

The great gold torc from Snettisham, Norfolk, buried with over a hundred other necklets in the 70s BCE


A Christian mosaic from a Roman villa at Hinton St Mary, Dorset, depicting the head of Christ in front of a 'chi-rho' Christian monogram (representing the first two letters of Christ's name in Greek, the X (chi) and P (rho)

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SAINT PATRICK

A little-known fact about Ireland's patron saint is that he was born in the later years of Roman Britain. Taken to Ireland as a slave for six years until he escaped, he later returned to bring Christianity to the island and claimed that he had raised people from the dead. The reason that the Irish wear shamrocks on their lapels on Saint Patrick's Day can also be accredited to the him - he is said to have used the three points of the plant to explain the concept of the Holy Trinity.

© Alamy

HOW THE ROMANS LIVED

All walks of life filled the streets of Ancient Rome, and for the poorer people of society the empire was very different to those at the top

Work hard, play hard. That appears to be the mantra by which a lot of Romans lived their lives. There's a general impression that the Romans were a wealthy, articulate bunch, who had splendid villas and clothes. However, that, in truth, is only half the story. As in any society, the normal men and women who lived and worked in Rome (Plebeians) led very different lives to those at the top of the tree (Patricians), residing in homes that were a world apart from the nobility and the elite and having differing levels of access to education and health provisions.

Today, most of the physical evidence of the lower class' existence has crumbled away. Their poorly built homes and unwritten stories have been lost to time. But historians have still been able to piece together the structure of Roman life: how they ate, what they wore, where they bathed and how they were schooled.

We also know that wealth was the key towards a good life, even for slaves who found they could amass money and sometimes buy their freedom.

> "The normal men and women who lived and worked in Rome (Plebeians) led very different lives to those at the top of the tree (Patricians)"

CLASS ACT: HOW THE ROMANS WERE DIVIDED

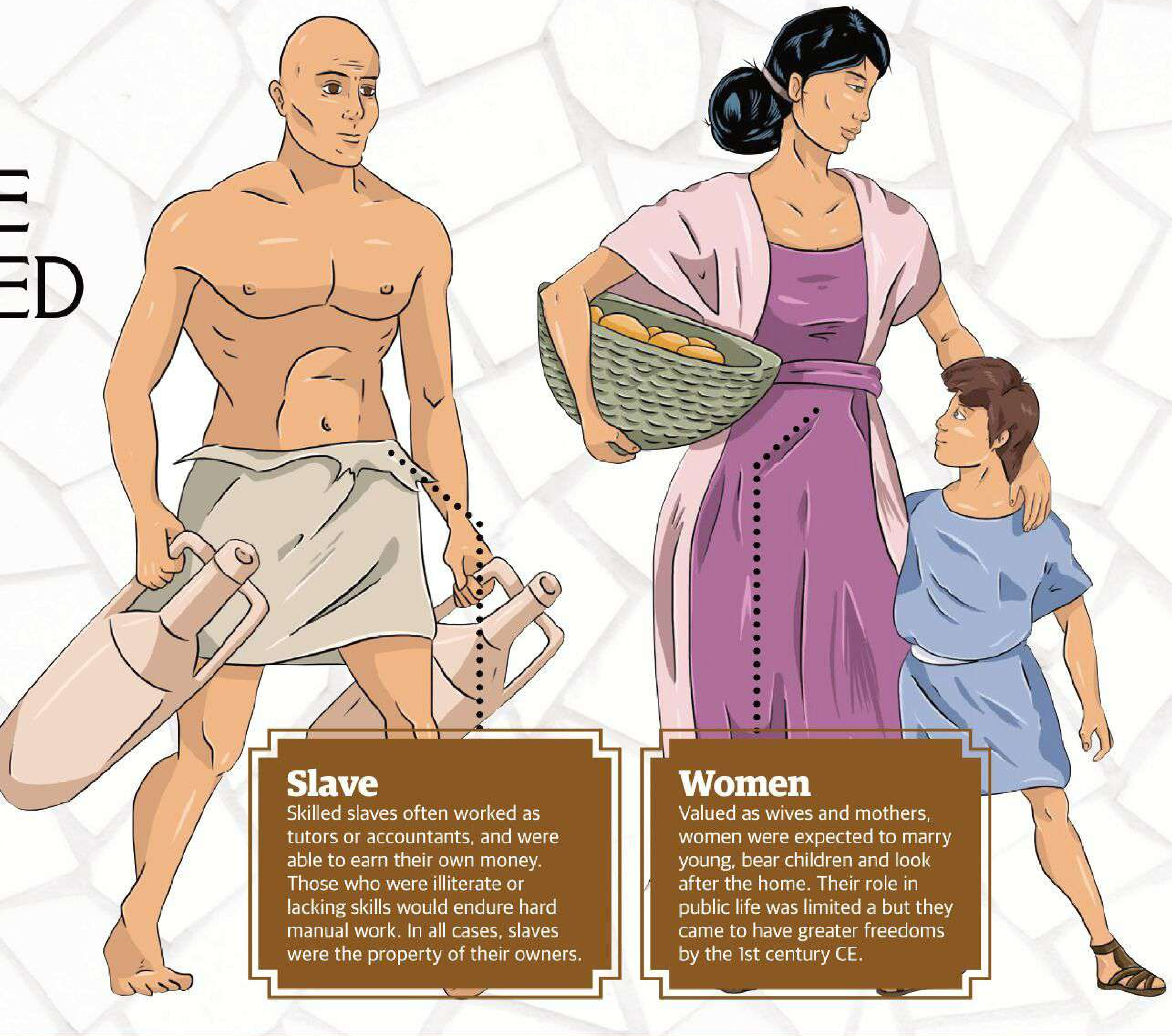
Roman society was a complex system made up of a strong social pecking order that went far beyond a simplistic dichotomy of very rich and incredibly poor. While we are familiar with the privileged lives of the emperors, senators and the equestrians below them, perhaps the most intriguing class of all was that of the plebeian.

The men and women of the lower classes were the beating heart of the empire but there were few comforts their work afforded them, and this didn't go unnoticed. A great dispute arose between the patricians and the plebeians in 494 BCE and it raged intermittently for 200 years.

In that year, the plebeians threatened to leave Rome – a withdrawal of manpower which would have proved devastating – and concessions were introduced. However, in the minds of the Romans there was still a difference in social standing, and the further down the chain you belonged, the worse your life became.

Beneath the plebeians in the Roman class hierarchy were the freedmen and the slaves. The latter did not hold citizenship, while the former had either been granted their freedom or had purchased it themselves.

Being a citizen afforded a Roman a relatively comfortable life and certain rights, making it possible to vote, own property, lawfully marry, make contracts, sue, and attain a lawyer in court to avoid torture or death for any crime except treason. However, women had a more limited citizenship.



Slave
Skilled slaves often worked as tutors or accountants, and were able to earn their own money. Those who were illiterate or lacking skills would endure hard manual work. In all cases, slaves were the property of their owners.

Women
Valued as wives and mothers, women were expected to marry young, bear children and look after the home. Their role in public life was limited a but they came to have greater freedoms by the 1st century CE.

LIFE AMONG THE CLASSES

In such a cut-throat city, how did the patricians, equestrians and plebeians navigate through Roman life?

If there was a social leveller in Rome, then it would be found in the public toilets, where 95 per cent of the million-strong population sat, chatted and did their foulest of business. Within the latrine walls, the Romans were at their most naked, with their tunics pulled up and squatting over the large holes cut in wood or stone, and their privacy completely whipped away. They wiped their bottoms with water-soaked sponges attached to sticks, which they then discarded into the Roman sewer system.

Back out on the streets, however, life was very different. There the class system was very much in place. At the top end of the scale were the higher ranks of Romans: the emperor, senators – who wore tunics with broad stripes called laticlavi – and an economic class of equestrians – who wore a tunic with narrow stripes called the angusti clavi. But further down, there were the ordinary people of Rome, wrapped in a long semicircle of woollen cloth called a toga, as well as the freedmen and the slaves. However the freedmen often occupied roles in the Imperial Palace, and so could improve their social standing and gain quality clothing.

The Plebeians saw Rome as it really was, away from the ornate, marbled villas and the grand buildings enjoyed by the privileged. Their warts-and-all view was of the cramped apartments in which they lived, multiple people to a room, in crowded areas that would absorb ever greater numbers year after year. For them Roman life was the narrow streets between the squalid high-rise garrets, the busy taverns and visiting the ground-floor shops (tabernae) to buy food and essentials.

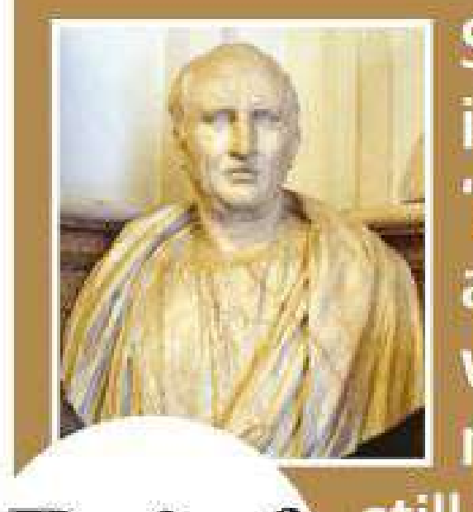
These areas may have wafted with the smell of fresh bread and exotic foods, but there would also have been the unmistakable stench of sweat, blood and human waste. Rome was usually a rowdy city, with fighting in the public areas, rows among residents, evidence of domestic violence and the ever-present risk of fire. Any moments of bliss could be interrupted by the emptying of a chamber pot out of a window to the ground below, particularly in the roughest part of town (subura.)

Rome certainly wasn't a city for the feint hearted, and the governors and senators had a constant battle to quash plebeian revolts and disharmony. Providing a weekly ration of grain and entertainment seemed satisfy the lower classes, and the organisers or benefactors of festivals were always held in high esteem.

Rome was seen as a ready-made job market for the poorer man, its streets perceived to be paved with gold as much as dirt and disease. The many building projects meant there was always a pressing need for labour, so plenty of people emigrated there looking to work. After its founding, the city of Rome fast became a bustling multicultural metropolis, but it was impossible to build enough quality accommodation for everyone. The harsh living quarters were generally as good as it got for hundreds of thousands of people, and for that reason, they tended to live most of their life outside of their apartments. The whole of Rome became their home.

MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO

3 Jan 106 – 7 Dec 43 BCE

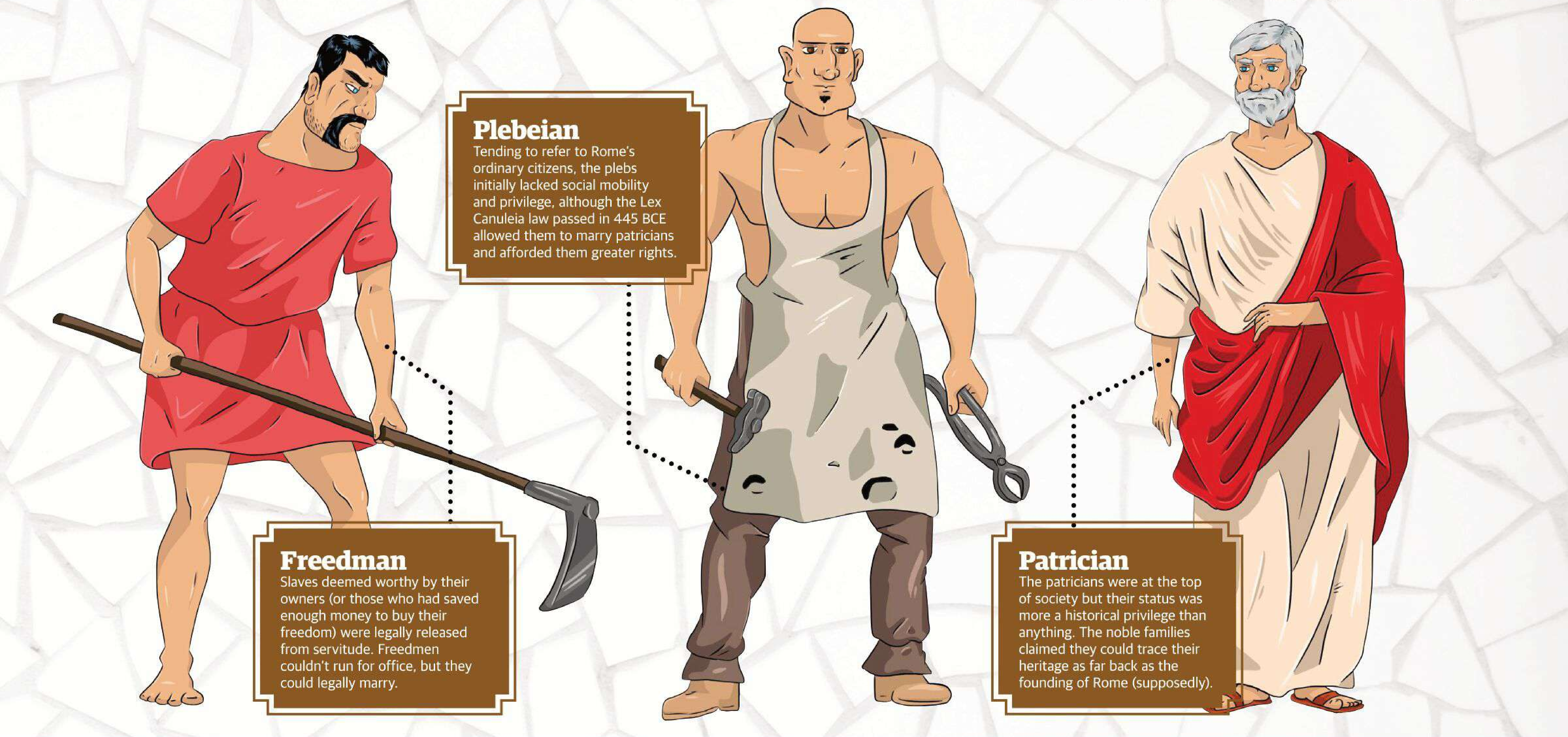


Brief Bio

Since a large factor in a Roman's 'nobility' was their ancestry, plebs who amassed money were still not considered patricians. The inability for Rome to shake off traditional divisions resulted in the creation of an equestrian class, acting as our equivalent of the middle class today. Cicero was an equestrian by birth, but he managed to become a senator through political connections and his notoriety as a great lawyer and orator. While his speeches and writing greatly influenced Roman politics, he could fall prone to snobbishness, once speaking of the sordida plebs – the great unwashed – a turn of phrase still common today. He was also an outspoken critic of Julius Caesar.

With so much time spent in the company of others, the plebeians were known for being sociable and rowdy. They were also mostly tolerant of different races and religions. Incomers were integrated into the city just as they had been from the moment Romulus and Remus' founded Rome as a city of outsiders, inviting criminals and runaways to seek asylum. People quickly got involved in the busy Roman way of life.

Workers would rise early, toiling through the day for a small amount



Plebeian
Tending to refer to Rome's ordinary citizens, the plebs initially lacked social mobility and privilege, although the Lex Canuleia law passed in 445 BCE allowed them to marry patricians and afforded them greater rights.

Freedman
Slaves deemed worthy by their owners (or those who had saved enough money to buy their freedom) were legally released from servitude. Freedmen couldn't run for office, but they could legally marry.

Patrician
The patricians were at the top of society but their status was more a historical privilege than anything. The noble families claimed they could trace their heritage as far back as the founding of Rome (supposedly).

of money and seeking ways to supplement their income elsewhere. Children would also work, the boys serving apprenticeships and the girls carrying out domestic chores under the watchful eyes of their mothers or a domina (female master) - usually splendidly dressed in their stolas given shape by a belt called a zona. Schools were mainly fee-paying and were reserved for the rich and privileged. However, poorer families would look to educate their sons themselves, fathers teaching sons the tools of their trade.

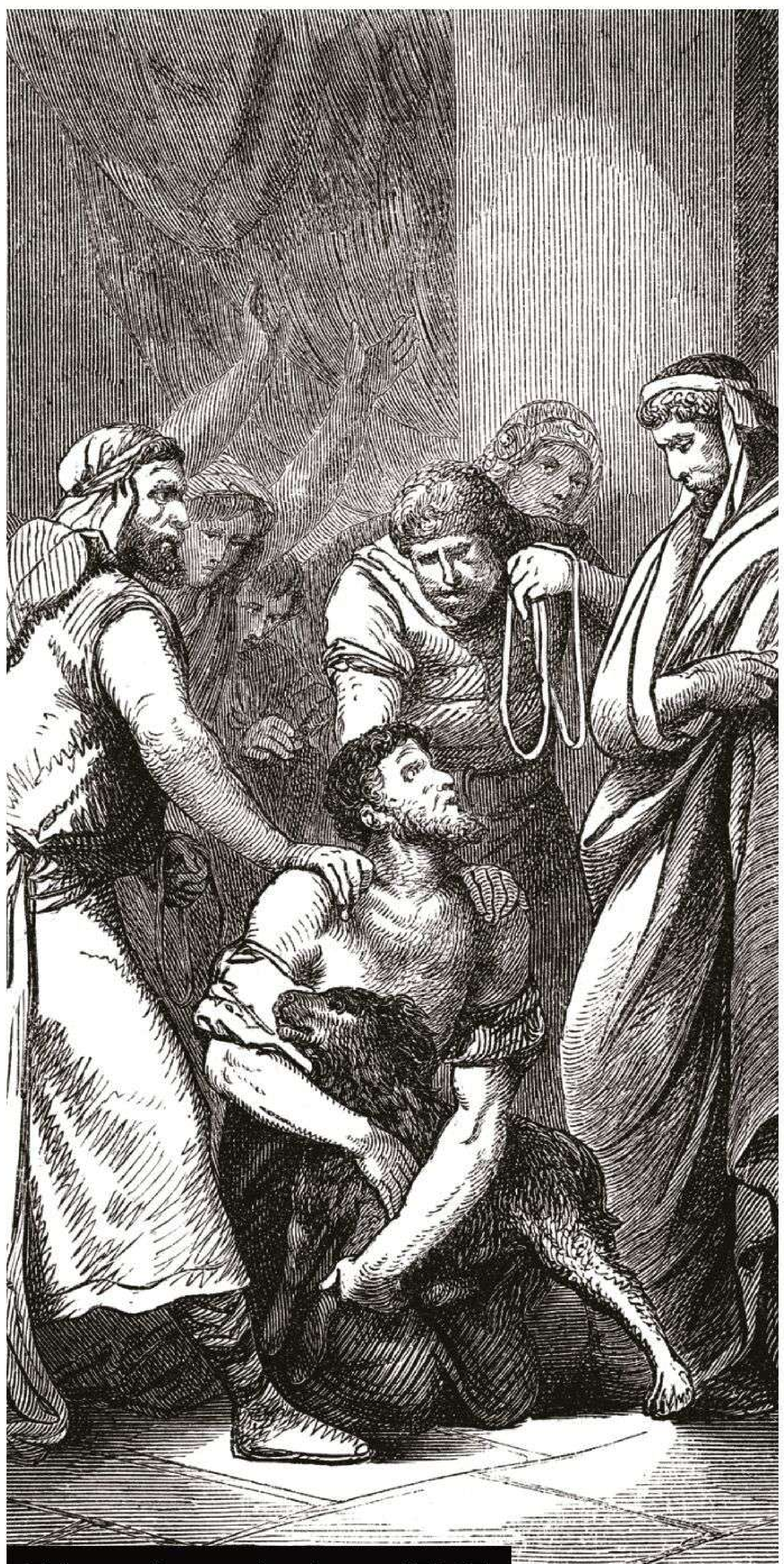
Generations of the poor, therefore, grew up largely illiterate but skilled nonetheless. By the age of 14 (12 for girls), the men would be married, their coming of age marked by a hearty banquet. Boys could be drafted into the military to help the Romans to conquer and control far-flung lands and girls were used to manoeuvre through social circles, and join powerful families.

According to Roman legend, Romulus and his twin brother Remus were the offspring of Rhea Silver and the God, Mars

The soldiers also served another purpose: yhey were able to capture slaves and bring them back to Rome. Far from being chosen on racial grounds, slaves were generally taken instead for their strength, intelligence, practical skills or appearance. While some were used as labourers or turned into gladiators or other figures of entertainment, they could also hold respectable positions in wealthy households. Rome's obsession with health and well-being, for example, saw an influx of Greek doctors entering as slaves after 47 BCE. As well as allowing Romans the benefits of better hospital treatment and the skill of surgeons, the Greeks also aided advances in medicine. In some ways, they were perhaps a little too enthusiastic - their willingness to experiment with patients in order to test their theories caused a deep suspicion. Having said that, it was usually preferable to the expensive quacks whose methods really were quite unorthodox.

Having treatment available was a benefit of Roman life across the classes: even the slaves much lower down the chain benefited to some degree. It also showed that being brought into Rome as a slave could actually be a good career move for the skilled. Many from the East in particular were intelligent and cultured, and were able to slot easily into society and contribute greatly. In fact, some Roman citizens with overwhelming debt would sell themselves into slavery. Some slaves were also allowed to earn and keep their own money, saving up to buy their freedom or expensive clothes. By the 1st century CE, more than half of Rome's population was made up of slaves and freedmen. At this time, the Senate proposed slaves wore their own specific identifying tunics but this was rejected because of the potential embarrassment of seeing half of Rome's population dressed in such a way.

Such was the lure of Rome that when a slave was afforded the status of a freedman, many would remain, becoming a Roman citizen and using their connections to their advantage. Some freedmen actually went on to hold important positions, such as Tiberius Claudius Narcissus, a close confidant of Emperor Claudius who almost succeeded in stopping Nero's succession to become ruler.



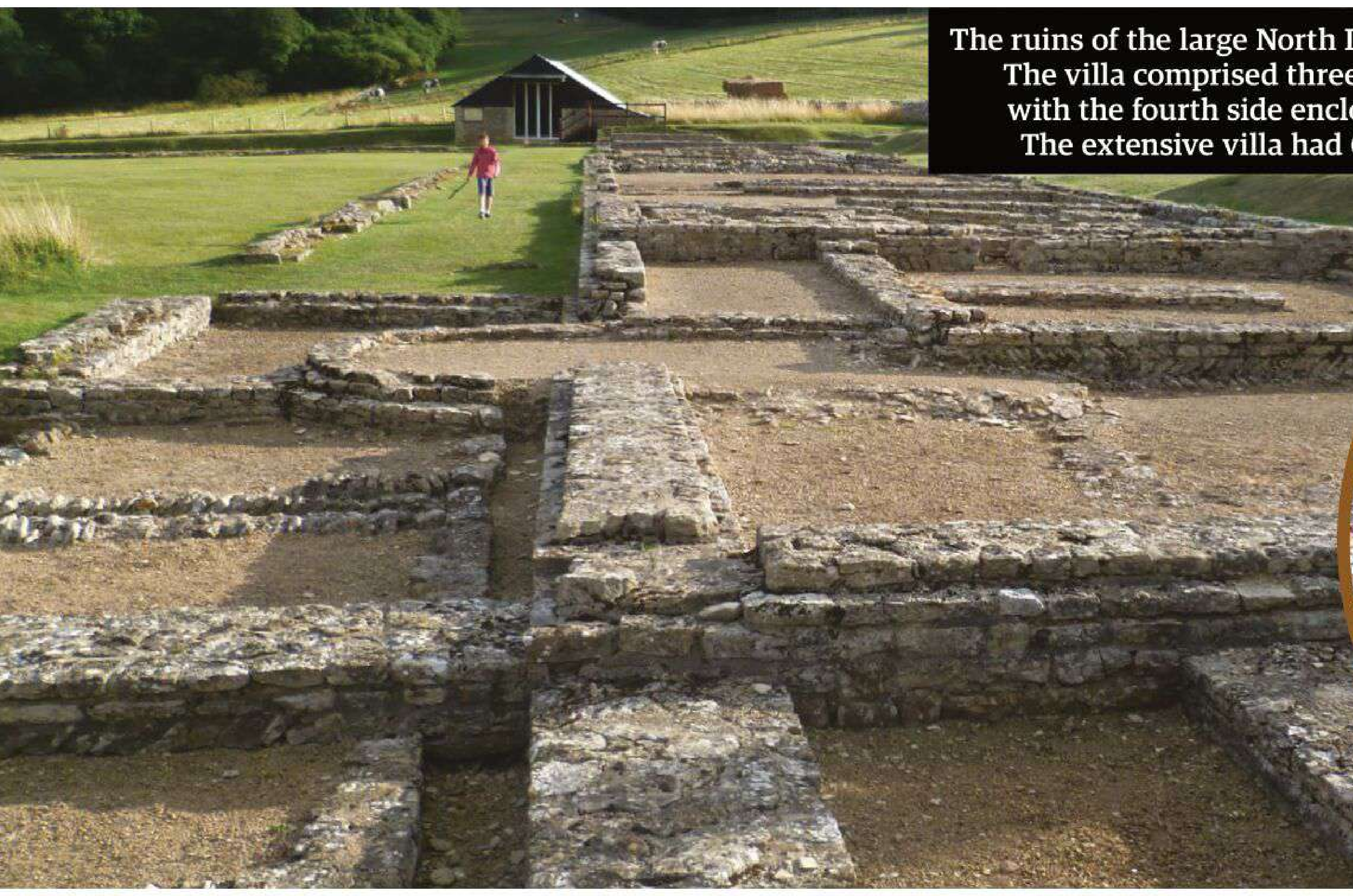
This wood engraving from c.377 CE shows a Therving selling himself as a slave for a dog to feed his family

HEARTHS, HOMES AND HYPOCAUSTS

The Romans brought with them new homes, landscapes and ways of living

Before the Roman conquest, Britain was formed of predominantly rural communities. The majority of people dwelled in roundhouses of mud, wattle and daub, timber and crowned with thatched roofs. These homes were unlikely to have separate rooms, so the space inside was more communal, especially the warming hearth in the centre. While there is evidence of rectangular buildings existing before the Romans' arrival, they were rare. Roundhouses continued to exist, in declining numbers, throughout the Roman rule of Britain – perhaps even 40 per cent of homes maintained this traditional design.

The Romans, particularly the elite, brought with them a culture that was both rural and urban, and the elite in particular needed a presence in both worlds: just as the growth of towns and urban life was a major part of Romanisation, so was the presence of villas dotted throughout the countryside. Villa, which translates as 'farm', does not tell the full story: far from simple farms, they were often country estates and could be key industrial centres or even countryside palaces of a sort, more about demonstrating power and prestige than working the land. Villas, usually located within 15 kilometres of towns, gave the elite access to both urban and rural worlds.



The ruins of the large North Leigh Roman villa in Oxfordshire. The villa comprised three buildings enclosing a courtyard, with the fourth side enclosed by a corridor and gatehouse. The extensive villa had 60 rooms and its own bath house

An intricate mosaic of Medusa at a villa in Bignor, west Sussex. Mosaics were a luxurious, high-status addition to British architecture, and were just one of the new, specialist skills that started to arrive in Britain

Villas were commonly surrounded by a mound and ditch and were positioned to face east, southeast or south, in order to receive the morning sun in the principal rooms. Villas could offer views of countryside that was impossible in urban townhouses, and these vistas were highly prized.

They were often built around a peristyled courtyard, and while symmetry was valued in Roman architecture, additional wings and outhouses were commonly added. A typical villa would be entered through a portico, or porch, often flanked by columns, that would lead into a series of reception rooms, dining room, kitchen, library and bedrooms. The principal rooms would look out over gardens or a courtyard. The most lavishly decorated rooms, often featuring mosaic floors, would be found towards the read or the building. Hypocausts, a form of underfloor heating, were extremely common in villas in Roman Britain. The grounds around them would likely possess a shrine, storage and bath houses.

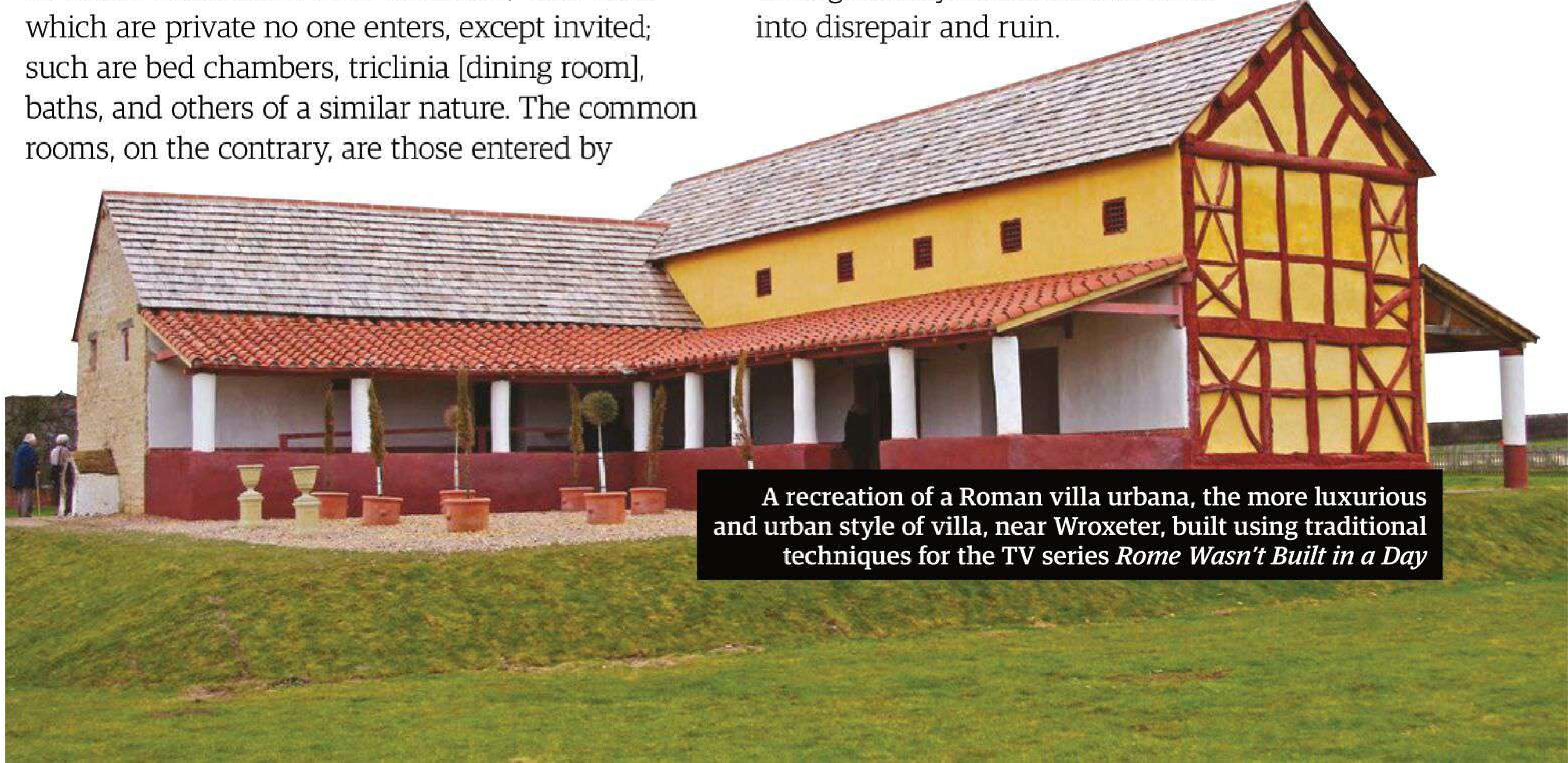
In town, townhouses were the urban abodes of the elite. They shared many similarities to villas in terms of style and decoration, although they were often more focused on being private due to the compact urban setting. Townhouses had a strong emphasis on hospitality, entertainment and greeting guests. They were built around what Dr Dominic Perring described as a "hierarchy of reception and movement": the portico would lead from the bustle of the street into a series of rooms, initially large reception rooms with views of the courtyard, gradually leading to the more intimate and better-decorated rooms towards the rear, possibly a dining room, where only the most privileged visitors would be admitted. As noted by the Roman architect Vitruvius in *De architectura*, "Into those which are private no one enters, except invited; such are bed chambers, triclinia [dining room], baths, and others of a similar nature. The common rooms, on the contrary, are those entered by anyone, even unasked. Such are the vestibule [hall], the cavædium [courtyard], the peristylia [colonnade], and those which are for similar uses." The use of columns, arches natural light and more luxurious decoration would have signalled the progress through the house.

Townhouses and villas were most likely single-storey, would have had walls of stone topped with timber or wattle and daub, with columns, a whitewashed exterior and ceramic or stone roof tiles. Windows would have been covered with wooden shutters, although glass windows were occasionally used.

But it was not only the elite whose homes were transformed by Roman influence. As urban centres grew, the need for rectangular housing became more apparent: round houses do not sit close together, whereas rectangular buildings can be placed compactly. In Britain, unlike in overcrowded cities like Rome and elsewhere in Italy, large, multi-storeyed housing in insula was unlikely to have been required. Urban housing was instead single-storey, made of wattle and daub or timber. These include 'strip' buildings – long, rectangular buildings with shops or workshops in the front and homes in the rear. They would have had small windows with wooden shutters and iron grilles covering them. More conventional hearths would have provided the much-needed warmth in these lower-status abodes.

It was not unheard of that these more humble homes would include reception rooms, although it was noted that the lower classes had less need for these by Vitruvius: "For a person of middling condition in life, magnificent vestibules [entrance hall] are not necessary, nor tablina [tablet storage], nor atria [courtyard], because persons of that description are those who seek favours which are granted by the higher ranks."

With the eventual breakdown of Roman rule in Britain, urban houses and countryside villas alike were gradually abandoned and fell into disrepair and ruin.



A recreation of a Roman villa urbana, the more luxurious and urban style of villa, near Wroxeter, built using traditional techniques for the TV series *Rome Wasn't Built in a Day*

FOOD FOR THE MASSES

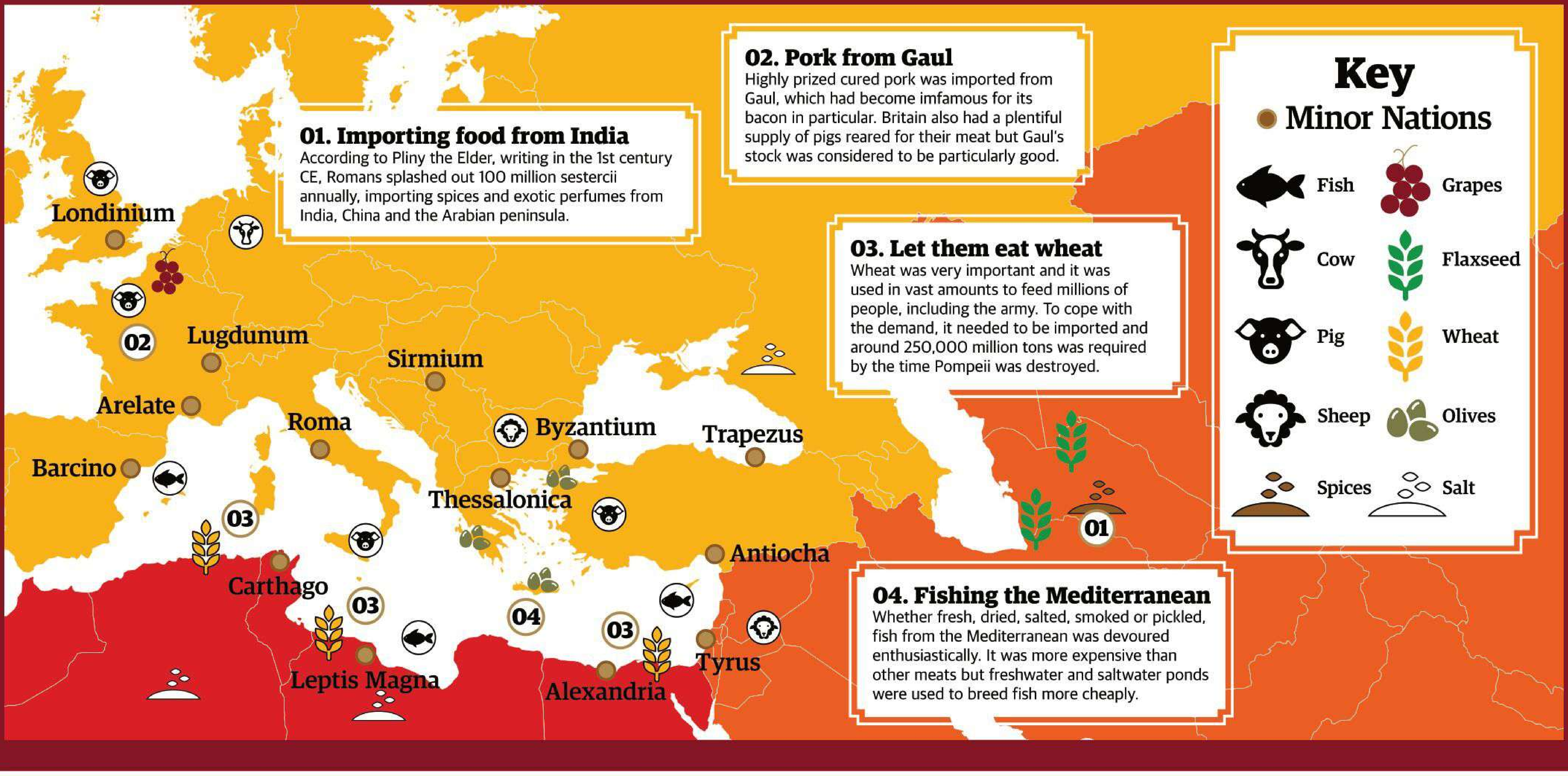
While the rich indulged their taste buds with an array of mouth-watering foods, brought to them by slaves, the diet of the poor was rather more bland. Most were unable to enjoy the sauces, expensive meats and imported spices that the aristocrats digested, so made do with cheaper alternatives.

The poor would rely on the staples of cereal, olive oil and wine and supplement it with bread, lentils, vegetables and porridge. Flat, round loaves made by cereal grain called 'emmer' were popular, but later bread made from wheat was introduced. Women would also grind grain into flour in thrusting mills, although there is evidence of animal-driven mills attached to bakeries such as in Pompeii and Ostia.

Farmers, hunters and fishermen had better diets and thanks to no religious restrictions, anything could be consumed. Cured pork was popular, while beef was much less common.

Roman citizens would eat their meals three times a day. They would have breakfast (jentaculum) in the morning, lunch (prandium) at roughly midday and dinner (cena) in the evening. This would be the main meal and the highlight of many days. A lot of effort went into producing the best dinner possible with the resources that were available.

Dinner parties were a popular affair for the patricians, and infamously, they would recline on couches in order to relax as they ate and savoured each mouthful. Stuffed dormouse was a particular delicacy enjoyed by the rich, sprinkled with honey and poppy seeds. Due to the lack of cutlery, the Romans would eat with their hands, so the food had to be conveniently presented. At dinner parties it was considered impolite to eat with your left hand.

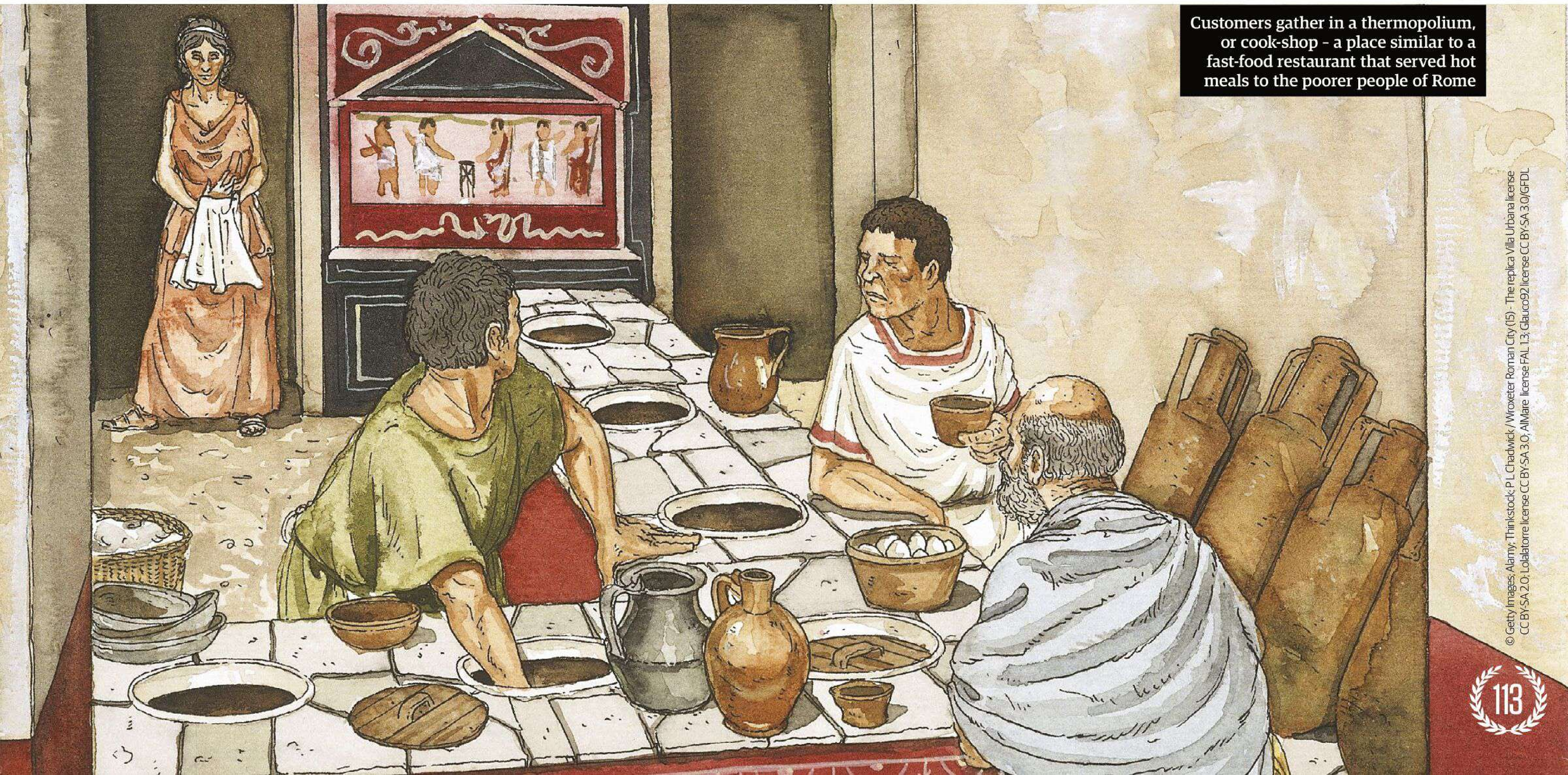


01. Importing food from India
According to Pliny the Elder, writing in the 1st century CE, Romans splashed out 100 million sestercii annually, importing spices and exotic perfumes from India, China and the Arabian peninsula.

02. Pork from Gaul
Highly prized cured pork was imported from Gaul, which had become imfamous for its bacon in particular. Britain also had a plentiful supply of pigs reared for their meat but Gaul's stock was considered to be particularly good.

03. Let them eat wheat
Wheat was very important and it was used in vast amounts to feed millions of people, including the army. To cope with the demand, it needed to be imported and around 250,000 million tons was required by the time Pompeii was destroyed.

04. Fishing the Mediterranean
Whether fresh, dried, salted, smoked or pickled, fish from the Mediterranean was devoured enthusiastically. It was more expensive than other meats but freshwater and saltwater ponds were used to breed fish more cheaply.



Customers gather in a thermopolium, or cook-shop – a place similar to a fast-food restaurant that served hot meals to the poorer people of Rome

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THE ROMAN ARMY

During the occupation of Britain, the military kept things running

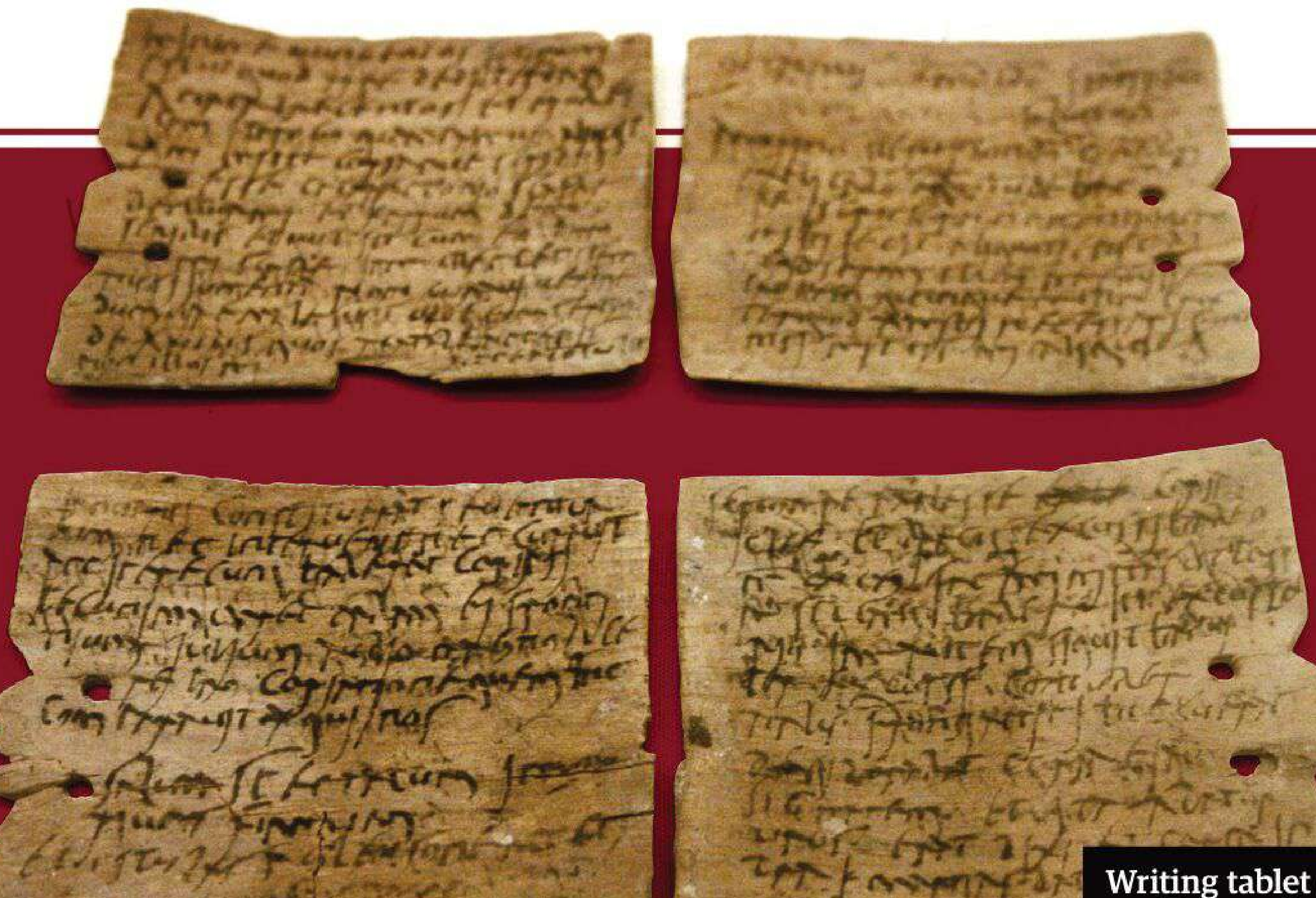
Written by Marc DeSantis

Like elsewhere in the territories controlled by the Roman Empire, the soldiers in Britannia were sorted into legions and subordinate auxiliary units. The former were composed of roughly 5,500 Roman citizens, almost all of whom were infantry and had joined for a fixed 25-year term of service.

The legionaries were then supplemented by numerous units of auxiliaries, which were made up of non-citizens, drawn from the many non-Roman peoples around the empire. Having said that, at the end of their terms of service, the lower-paid auxiliaries were entitled to Roman citizenship. By the middle of the 2nd century CE, there were around 40,000 auxiliaries in Britain alone, garrisoned all over the province, and auxiliary horsemen comprised a large proportion of the cavalry there.

Three legions provided the bulk of the Roman legionary presence in Britain during the 1st and 2nd centuries CE: II Augusta, VI Victrix and XX Valeria Victrix. The legions had their main bases at Isca (II Augusta, Caerleon, Wales), Deva (XX Valeria Victrix, Chester, England) and Eboracum (VI Victrix, York, England), with each fortress strategically placed to enable the Romans to control the surrounding territory.

Britannia was knit together by sturdy, Roman-built roads that linked the army's many bases and made movement across the province faster and easier. The presence of the legions helped to speed the process of Romanisation in Britain, as they were often equipped with cutting-edge facilities. For example, legionary fortresses contained heated baths, which were popular among Roman soldiers and civilians alike.



Writing tablet excavated from a Roman fort at Vindolanda

SOLDIERS AT VINDOLANDA

Excavations at Vindolanda, the site of a Roman fort, have uncovered large numbers of letters on wooden writing tablets. The majority were composed with ink applied to the wood with a pen. These tablets have allowed extraordinary insights into Roman army life on the frontier and were not all strictly military. One tablet, dating to about 100 CE, was actually a birthday invitation from the wife of a commander of another fort to Sulpicia Lepidina, who was married to Flavius Cerialis, the commander of a Batavian auxiliary cohort (Cohors IX Batavorum) stationed at the Vindolanda fort. Another tablet contained a request made by a cavalry officer to Cerialis for more beer.

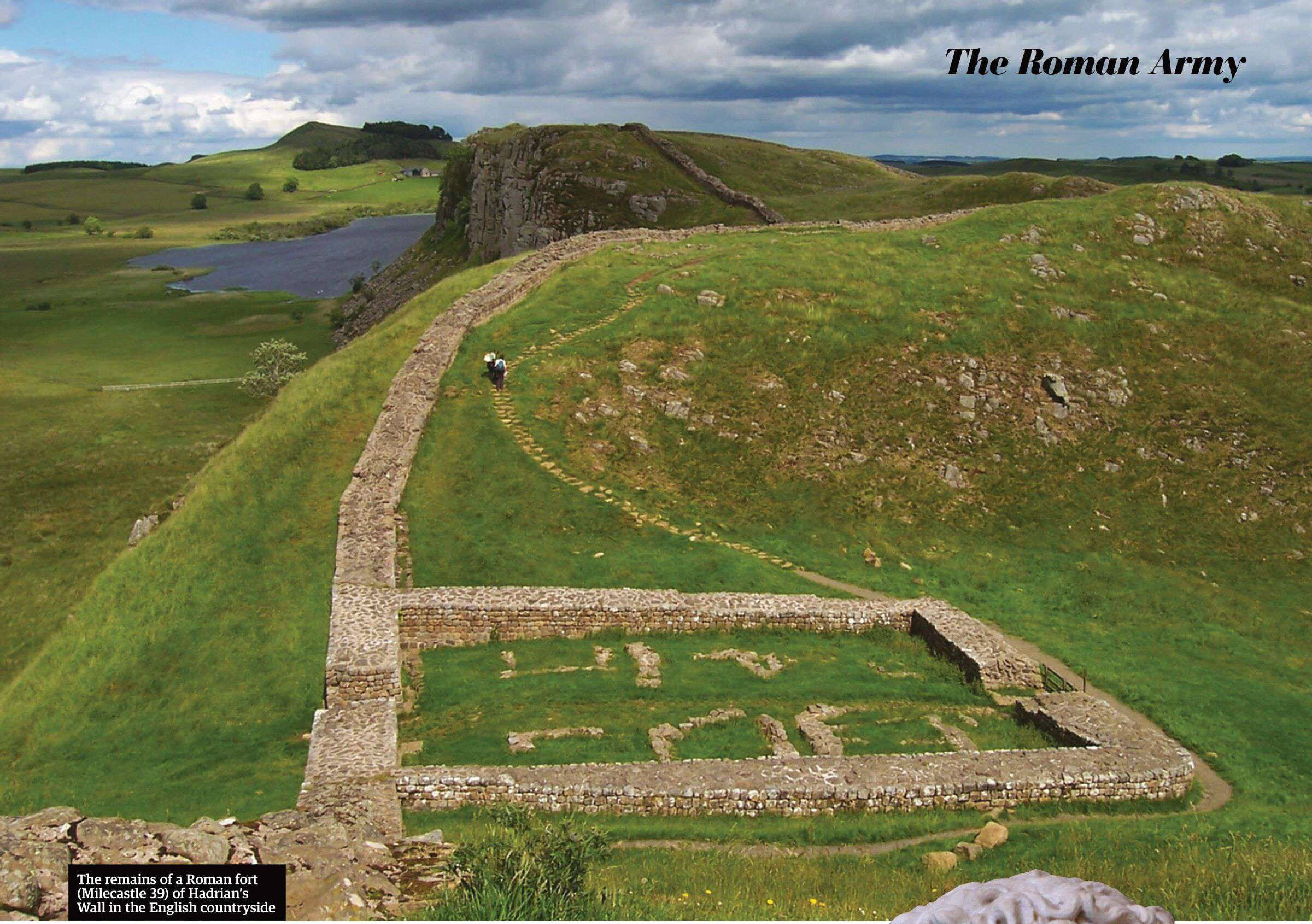
The tablets themselves generally date from between 90 and 120 CE, when the fort served as the base of two auxiliary cohorts: the aforementioned Cohors IX Batavorum and Cohors I Tungrorum. The cache of wooden tablets, remarkably well preserved because of the low-oxygen soil in which they were buried, represents the largest collection of Latin language letters ever found. The numerous tablets also demonstrate that many Roman soldiers were literate.

PROTECTING THE BORDER

The north of Roman Britannia was initially guarded by a handful of forts but during the reign of Emperor Hadrian, the need for a continuous defensive barrier was judged necessary to prevent raids by the Britons living beyond Roman control. Work was begun on a stone wall in 122 CE, and it was finally completed six years later. Named after the emperor, Hadrian's Wall stretched for some 118 kilometres from east to west, from Newcastle upon Tyne to Solway.

Forts for the garrisons were located slightly south of the Wall, along the Stanegate road that ran from Carlisle to Corbridge, and one such Stanegate fort town was Vindolanda. Numerous auxiliary units were housed either in them or on the wall itself. The benefit of the wall, which was not especially tall, was that it allowed the Romans to regulate traffic into or out of the province and also prevented tribal raiders from the north from entering Britain to attack Roman fortifications and make off with stolen livestock.

Remarkably, the Romans abandoned Hadrian's Wall within decades of its completion. In 142, another shorter and simpler defensive barrier known as the Antonine Wall was started approximately 113 kilometres further north in what is today southern Scotland. No reason for this major move survives, but it is reasonable that



The remains of a Roman fort (Milecastle 39) of Hadrian's Wall in the English countryside

Roman security required the extension of imperial control northward over unruly Britons.

The 60-kilometre Antonine Wall took its name from Emperor Antoninus Pius. Running from the Firth of Forth in the east to the Firth of Clyde in the west, it was much less sophisticated than Hadrian's Wall, being primarily a turf rampart about three metres in height, studded with forts, with a deep ditch in front of it. Construction was conducted by the men of the Roman legions stationed in Britain at the time: II Augusta, VI Victrix and XX Valeria Victrix. The legionaries left behind carved stone 'distance slabs' to indicate which Roman legion had built that particular section of the wall.

However, the Antonine Wall did not remain in use for long. It was abandoned in 162, with the legions returning south to reoccupy Hadrian's Wall.

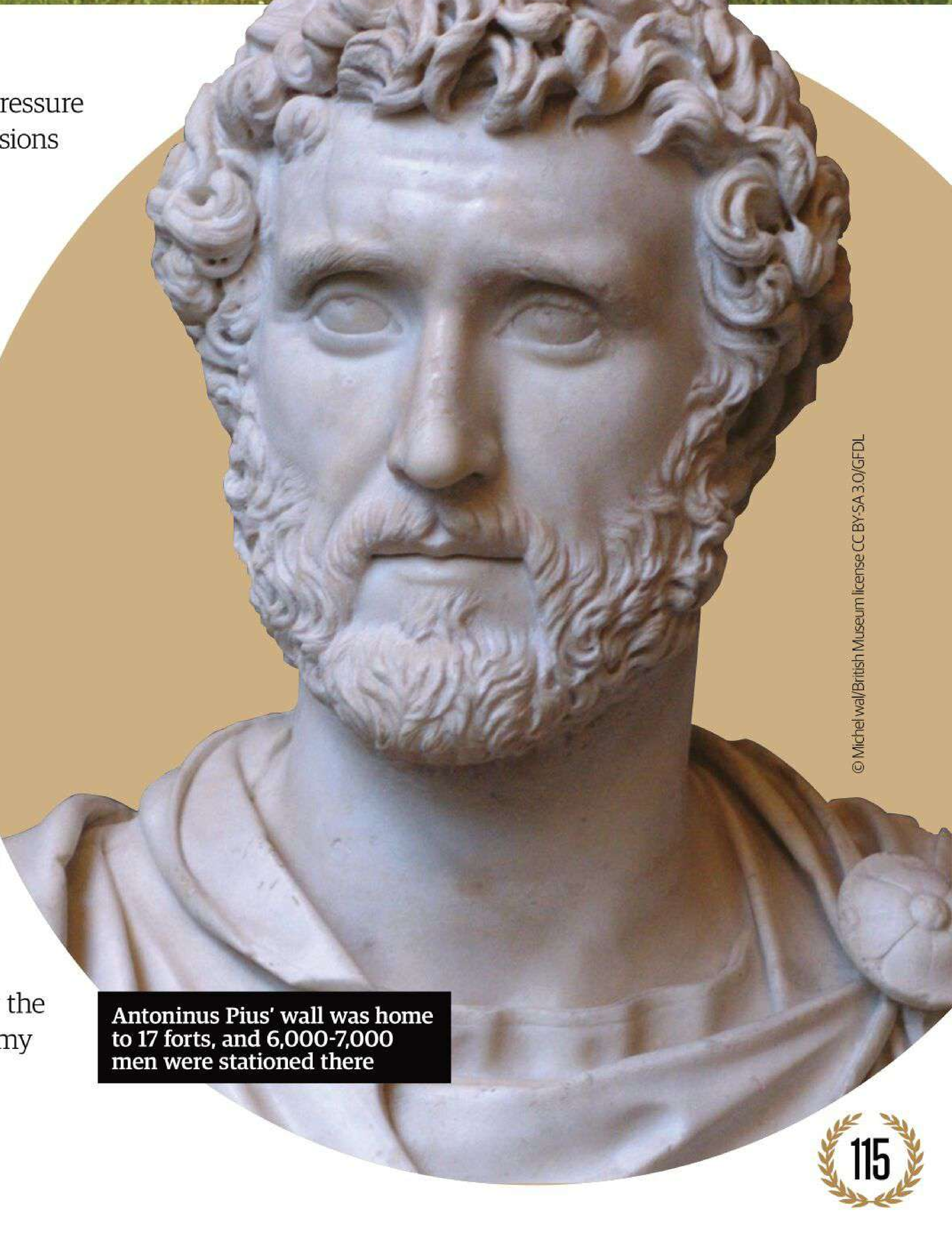
THE LATER EMPIRE

The Roman Empire found itself under increasing pressure in the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th centuries. Foreign invasions preoccupied the army, which was hard-pressed to stop them all. In 208, Emperor Septimius Severus personally led a military expedition into modern Scotland against the troublesome Caledonians living north of the frontier.

In the late 3rd century Britain would briefly be part of a breakaway empire including Gaul and Roman Germany. The rump portion of this empire, consisting of Britain only, was forcibly brought back under imperial control in 296, when its rebel ruler, Allectus, was killed in battle.

In the 4th century, Saxon raids grew increasingly frequent and destructive. A Roman commander, the comes litoris Saxonici, or Count of the Saxon Shore, was given responsibility for defending western Britain and the English Channel from these seaborne attackers.

The last Roman troops would be removed from Britain in 407 when a Roman commander, Constantine III, crossed over the Channel with them to the continent. In 410, a plea for aid by the native Britons against Saxon raiders was denied by the Western Roman emperor Honorius. The Roman army was never to return.



Antoninus Pius' wall was home to 17 forts, and 6,000-7,000 men were stationed there

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THE END OF ROMAN RULE

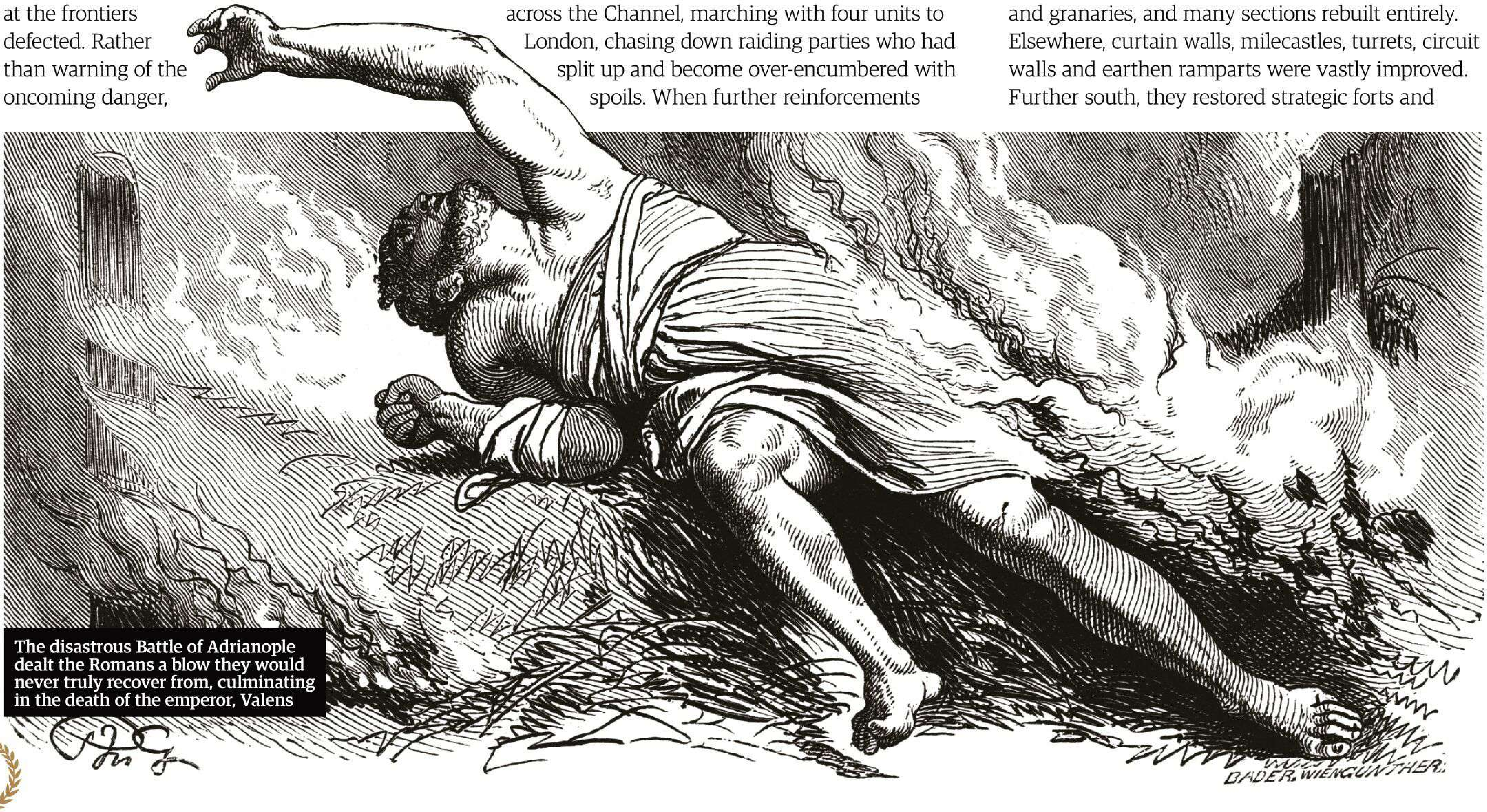
Though the late Western Roman Empire treated Britain as an afterthought, it was the source of some of its most troublesome rebellions, stripping itself of its Romans until none were left

Written by **Hareth Al Bustani**

In 367 CE, the Roman province of Britain succumbed to a 'Barbarian Conspiracy', as the island fell prey to simultaneous attacks from the Picts in the north, the Attacotti from the Western Isles, the Scots from Ireland, and Saxon and Frankish pirates along the southeast coast. This united assault was a first for Britain, enough to overcome the previously impregnable Hadrian's Wall. Its success was made possible by treachery, as the Roman rangers, scouts and spies stationed at the frontiers defected. Rather than warning of the oncoming danger, they pocketed bribes, supplying troop movements to the attackers, and allowing them to make off with wagons of booty, slaves and cattle. Faced with this perfidious, multi-pronged onslaught, even the bravest Romans were forced to disperse – wandering the countryside, or else on 'indefinite leave'. Slaves too fled their captivity and looted whatever they could get their hands on, and for two years anarchy reigned over the island.

In response, the Romans sent Count Theodosius across the Channel, marching with four units to London, chasing down raiding parties who had split up and become over-encumbered with spoils. When further reinforcements arrived from the continent, the deserters returned to the fold, pardoned upon arrival. Their combined presence alone was enough to send the barbarians scattering back home, giving Theodosius time to reorganise Britain's towns, forts and defences.

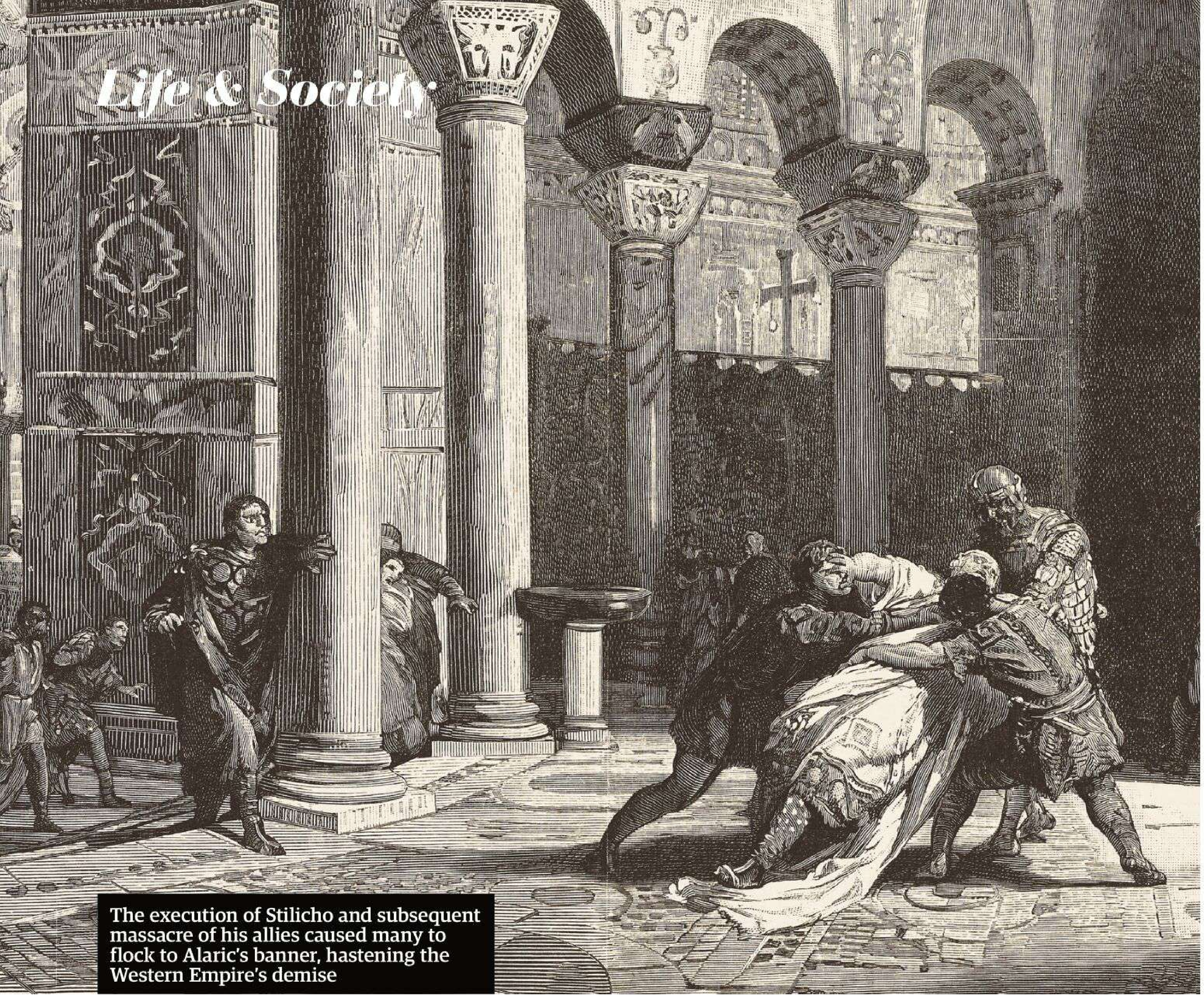
First, he removed the traitorous scouts and abandoned the outposts beyond Hadrian's Wall, instead shoring up a buffer zone of friendly northern tribes and client kings. The wall itself was given a makeover, with new toilets, baths and granaries, and many sections rebuilt entirely. Elsewhere, curtain walls, milecastles, turrets, circuit walls and earthen ramparts were vastly improved. Further south, they restored strategic forts and


BADER.WIENGUNTHER.

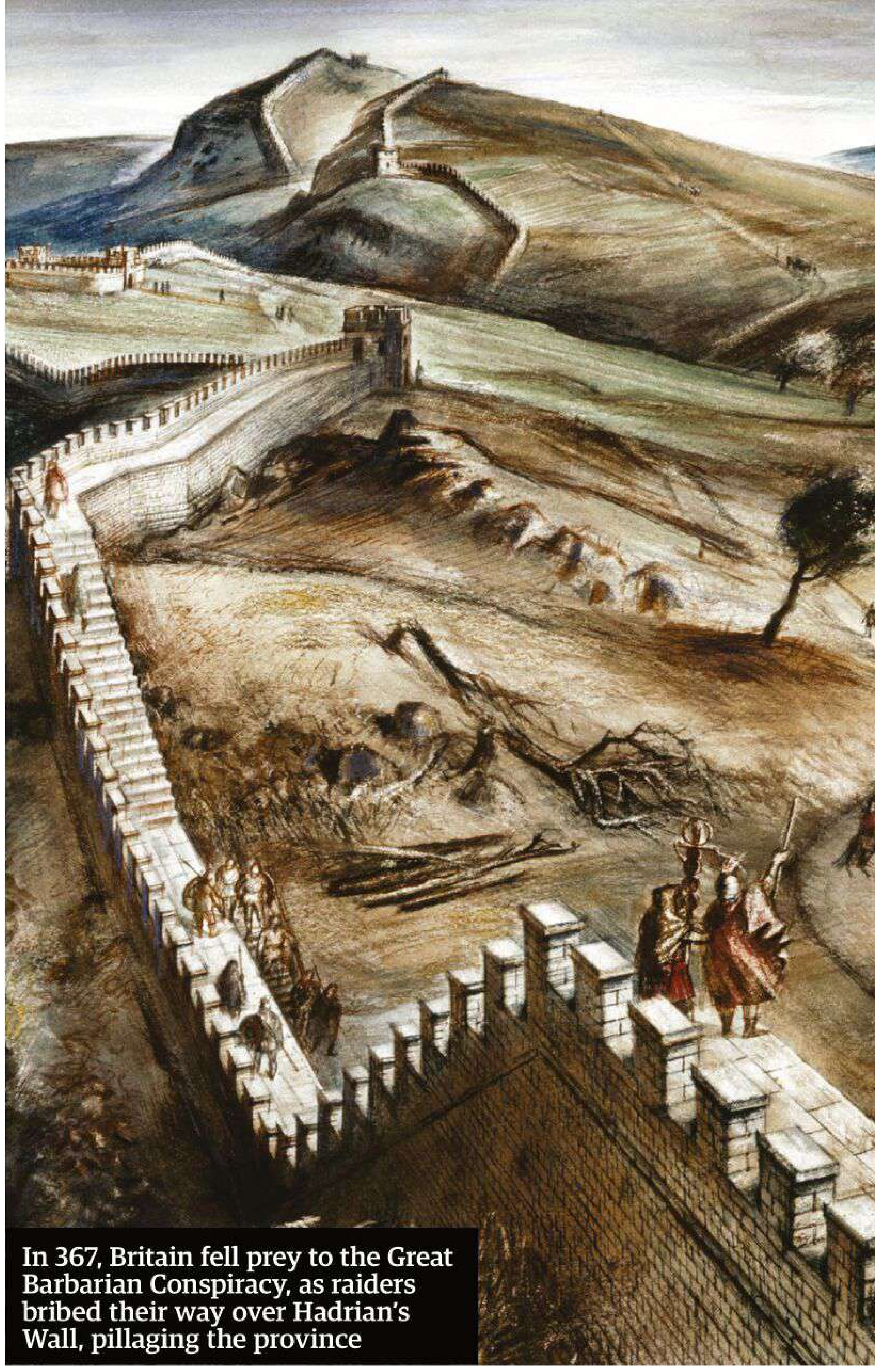
The disastrous Battle of Adrianople dealt the Romans a blow they would never truly recover from, culminating in the death of the emperor, Valens

SYLVESTRE 1890

The Sack of Rome was the last act of defiance from Alaric, who never realised his dream of securing land for his people



The execution of Stilicho and subsequent massacre of his allies caused many to flock to Alaric's banner, hastening the Western Empire's demise



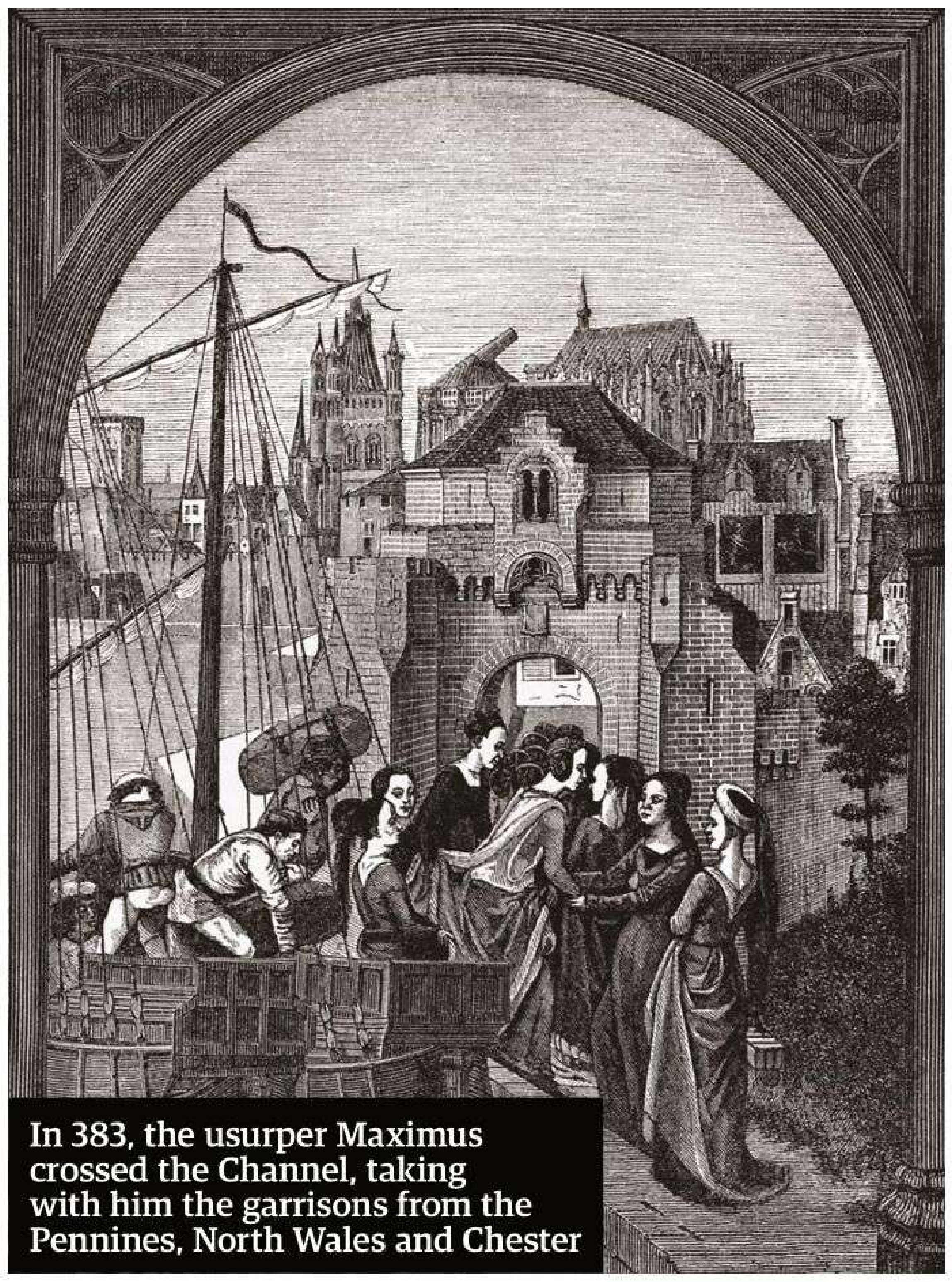
In 367, Britain fell prey to the Great Barbarian Conspiracy, as raiders bribed their way over Hadrian's Wall, pillaging the province

towns, adding towers to support catapults and ballistae along the walls, while simultaneously fortifying the southern coastlines with signal stations and look-out towers. Though the island had never been more prosperous, its abundance of Roman riches painted a target on its back. Moreover, it was dangerously short on manpower – symptomatic of a worsening, empire-wide crisis.

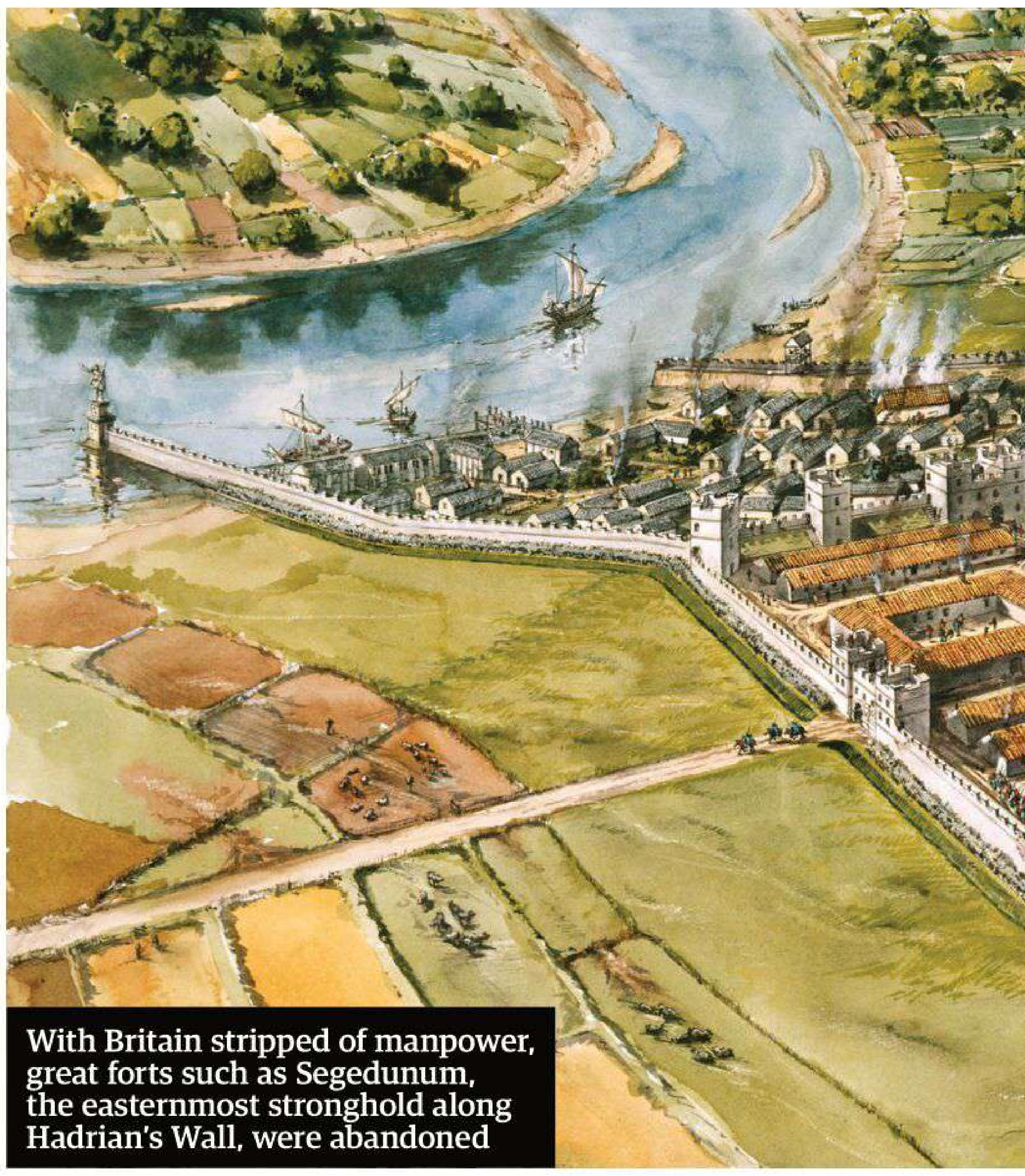
In 382, the Eastern Roman emperor, Theodosius, son of Count Theodosius, defeated a confederation of Gothic invaders by the skin of his teeth. However, rather than utterly routing them, he signed treaties acknowledging the various tribes as foederati, or allies. The devastating Battle of Adrianople had left the Eastern Empire dangerously short on soldiers, and Theodosius would come to rely increasingly on his barbarian clients. Although the empire had survived, a year later the Western emperor Valentinian I died; he was succeeded by his son Gratian. The young emperor's preferential treatment of barbarian auxiliaries had made him immensely unpopular, as he lavished promotions and spoils on them alone. Long-simmering discontent came to a boil on the island of Britain, spearheaded by an Iberian general, Magnus Maximus. Having risen slowly through the ranks – perhaps even serving under Count Theodosius – he had earned the admiration of his men, who declared him emperor.

Maximus crossed the Channel, taking with him garrisons from the western Pennines and North Wales, along with the legion from Chester. He stripped Hadrian's Wall, entrusting its defence to the friendly northern kingdoms of Votadini and Strathclyde, while creating the Novantae dynasty in southwest Scotland. He most likely established loyal dynasties in Wales, too, to help plug the gap that the Chester legion left behind. Along with the island's greatest officers and warriors, he was joined by many British volunteers, receiving a hero's welcome by the soldiers on the Rhine. His army so overwhelmed the enemy that after five days of clashes near Paris, Gratian's leading general defected to Maximus' side. Gratian fled towards the Alps, only to be caught and executed near Lyons, leaving Maximus in control of Britain, Gaul and Spain. Upon his victory, he invited Gratian's half-brother and co-emperor, Valentinian II, now ruling over Italy, to lead by his side, as 'father and son'. He also wrote to Theodosius, demanding that he recognise him as a Western emperor, or prepare to face him on the battlefield.

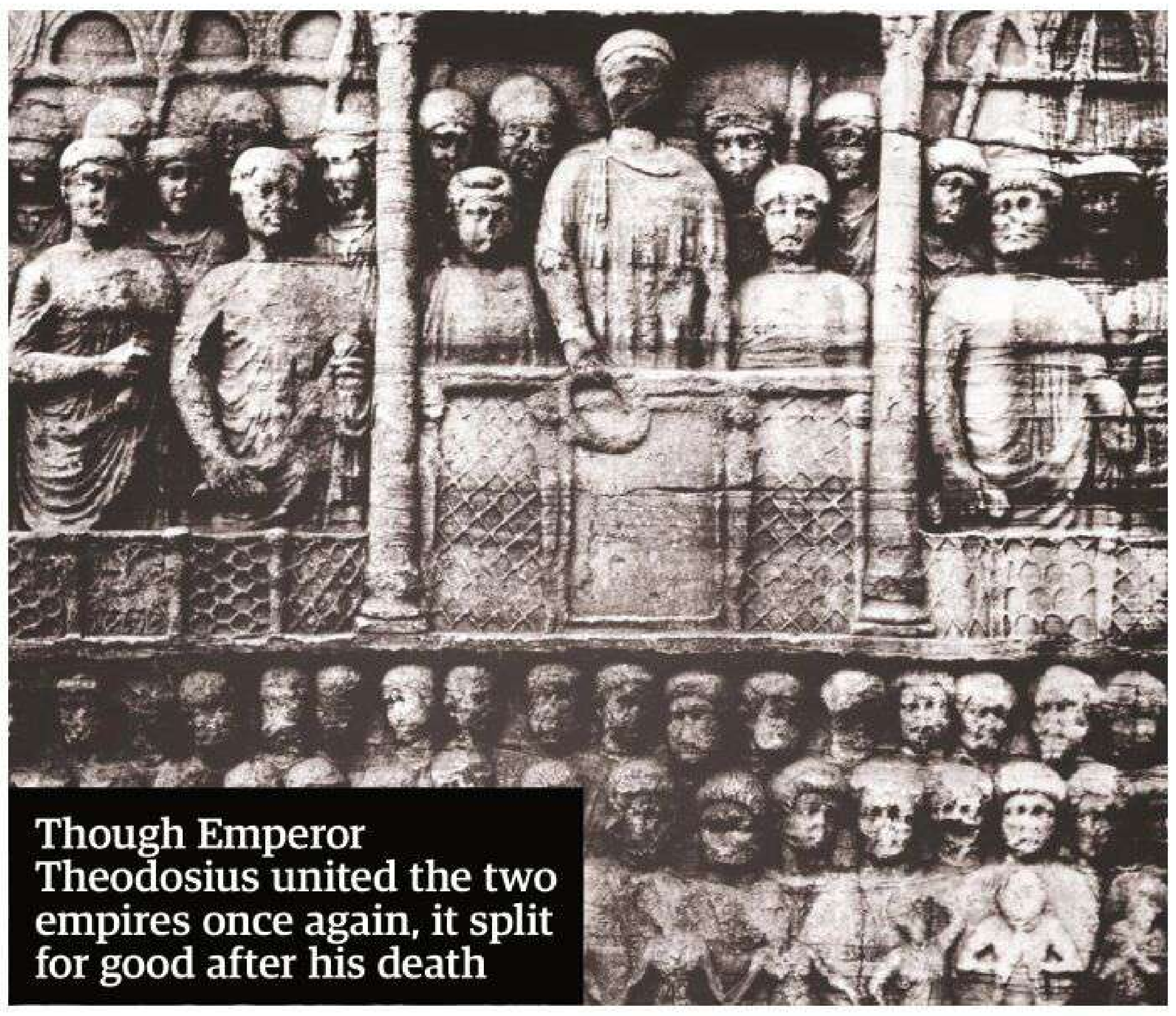
Already overstretched, Theodosius had no choice but to appease the usurper – leaving the Danube would open the frontier up to barbarian invasion. In 384, he recognised Maximus, issuing coins bearing both their names, and presenting their images together in public. Just a few years later, Maximus launched a surprise attack on Valentinian, driving him into the Balkans. In 388, he arrived in Milan and, taking up the consulship, considered the Western Empire officially his. Theodosius, on the other hand, had decided enough was enough. Launching a Blitzkrieg campaign, he utterly overwhelmed Maximus – defeating him twice in Yugoslavia and apprehending him at Aquileia. After being dragged to the victor in chains, Maximus was reprimanded and executed. Those who left Britain with him never returned, leaving it devoid of the



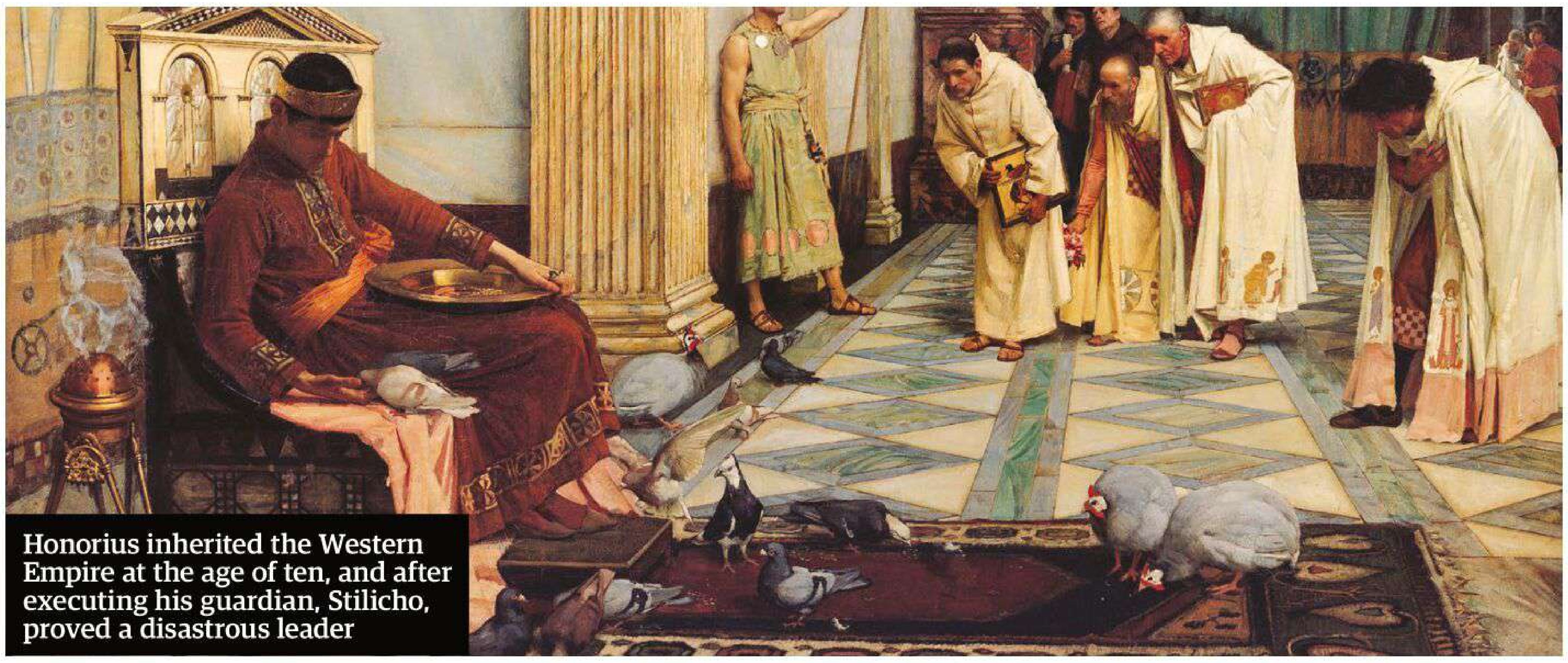
In 383, the usurper Maximus crossed the Channel, taking with him the garrisons from the Pennines, North Wales and Chester



With Britain stripped of manpower, great forts such as Segedunum, the easternmost stronghold along Hadrian's Wall, were abandoned



Though Emperor Theodosius united the two empires once again, it split for good after his death



Honorius inherited the Western Empire at the age of ten, and after executing his guardian, Stilicho, proved a disastrous leader

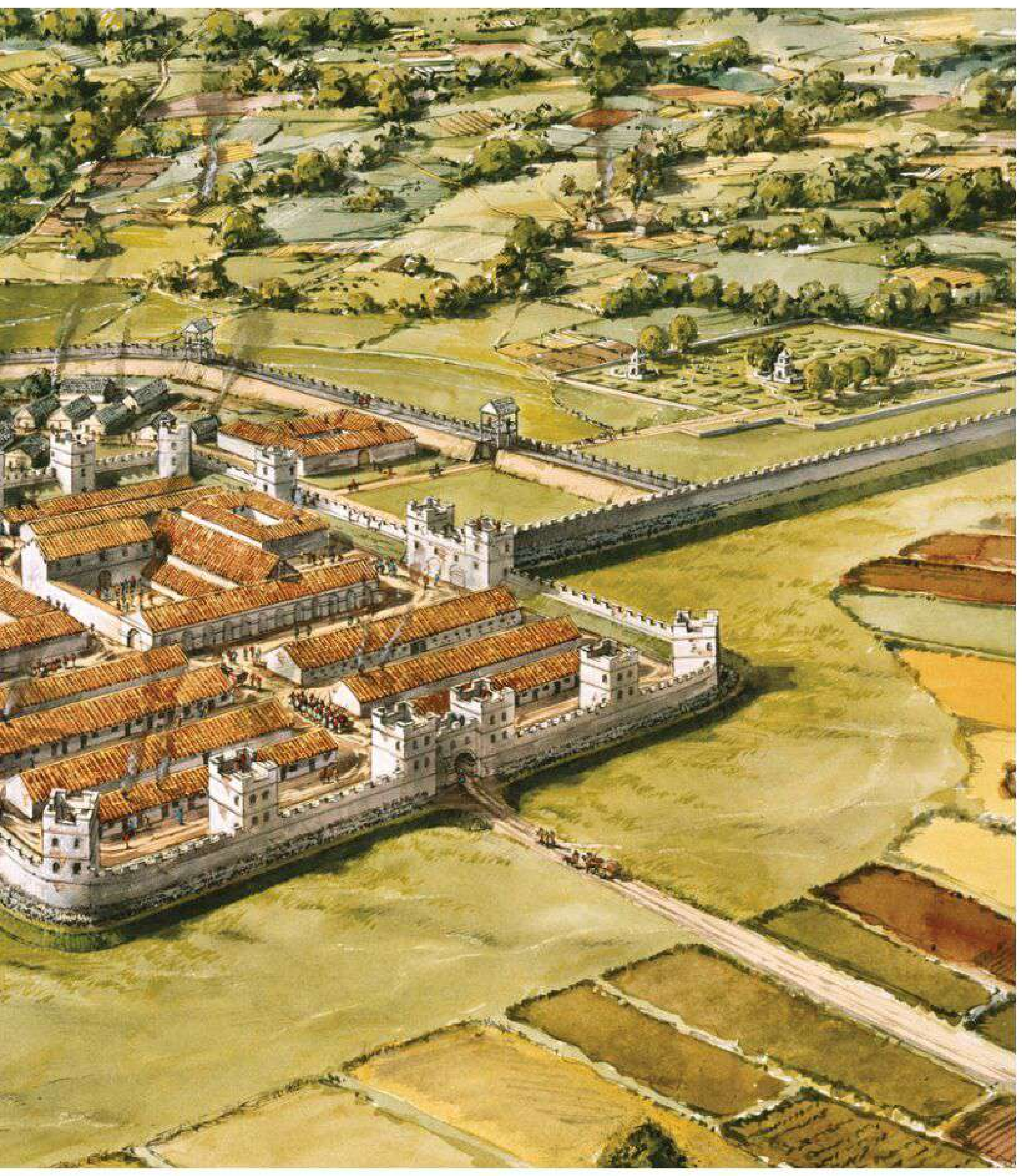
defences that had been reinforced just decades earlier. The forts of the western Pennines, Wales and Chester were all abandoned, and others were left with tiny garrisons.

After Valentinian's murder, Theodosius temporarily reunited the Eastern and Western Empire for the last time in Roman history. His own death would mark a key moment in the decline and collapse of the Roman Empire, as it was split once again in 395 between his sons, Honorius in the West, and Arcadius in the East. With Honorius only ten years old, responsibility fell to his guardian, Flavius Stilicho, a Vandal who had married into the imperial family. At the time, 40 per cent of the entire empire's army was stationed in the West, but two-thirds of its tax burden was carried by the East. Though Stilicho sought to unify the empire's powers for the mutual good, Arcadius had problems of his own.

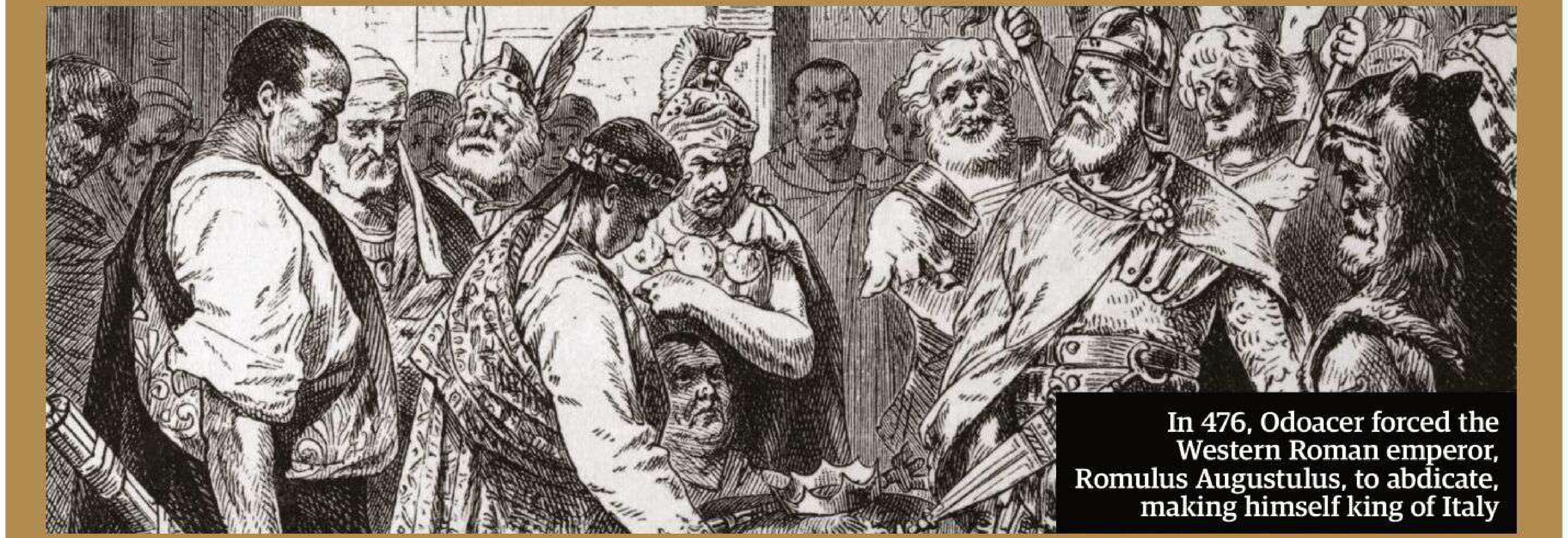
After Theodosius' death, the empire's Visigoth foederati had risen up in rebellion behind their new king, Alaric, attacking the eastern territories of Macedonia and Thrace. The following year, the Huns attacked Syria and Asia Minor. Eager to help, Stilicho marched east, fighting back the Goths – only to receive an unscrupulous letter from Arcadius, ordering him to send the army to Constantinople and return west. Having failed to stop the Goths' romp through Greece and Epirus, Arcadius was eventually forced to hand Alaric an official title, and a license to plunder the region's cities and arsenals.

In 401, with Stilicho at the pinnacle of his powers, Alaric turned his ambitions westwards, hurtling his army into a rapacious raiding campaign across the Western Empire. With the Vandals and Alani devastating Raetia and Noricum, and the Goths now ransacking Italy, Stilicho desperately clawed soldiers from across his domain. Though he had sent a naval expedition to repel the Scots, Picts and Saxons, in the face of this grave existential threat, even those stationed along the empire's most distant frontiers were dragged to the front lines. Honorius, too, was relocated from Milan in northwest Italy to Ravenna on the east coast. The move shifted the empire's focus away from its leading sources of top soldiers in Gaul and Germany, towards the threat from the northeast. With the bulk of his army composed of barbarian auxiliaries, Stilicho barely held on, pushing Alaric out of Italy.

In 405, with the Visigoths licking their wounds, the Ostrogoths tried their hand, crossing over the Alps and invading northern Italy. Stilicho's army, a patchwork of exhausted legions, joined by Alani, Huns, Goths and even volunteer slaves, was too small to oppose them. After the invaders finished raiding, Stilicho began to press the West's claim over the Eastern prefecture of Illyricum, bordering the Italian Peninsula. Relations with the East had long soured, and the region would both provide a solid supply of troops and aid the defence of Italy. To this effect, Stilicho even reached out an



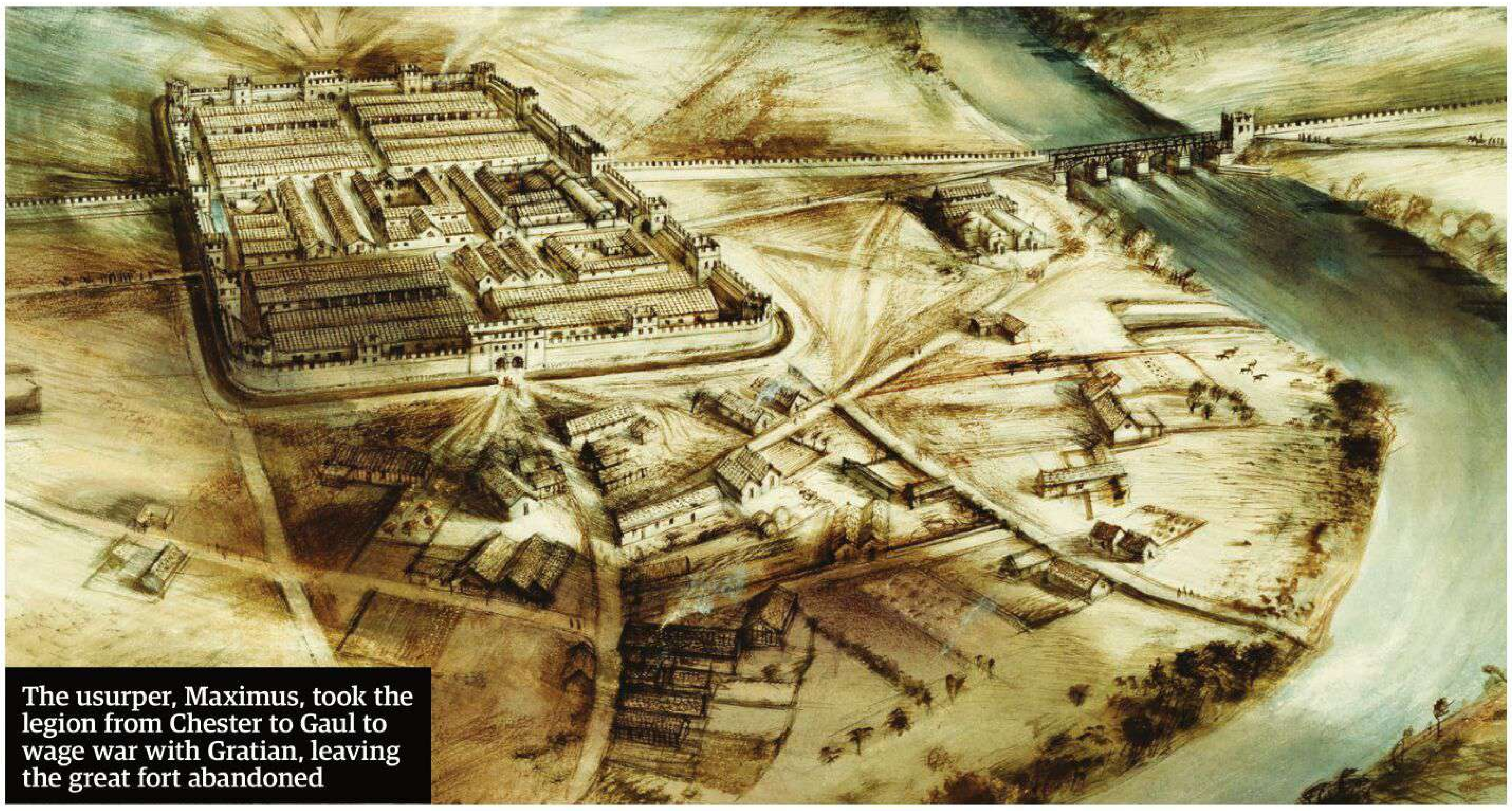
THE COLLAPSE OF THE WESTERN ROMAN EMPIRE



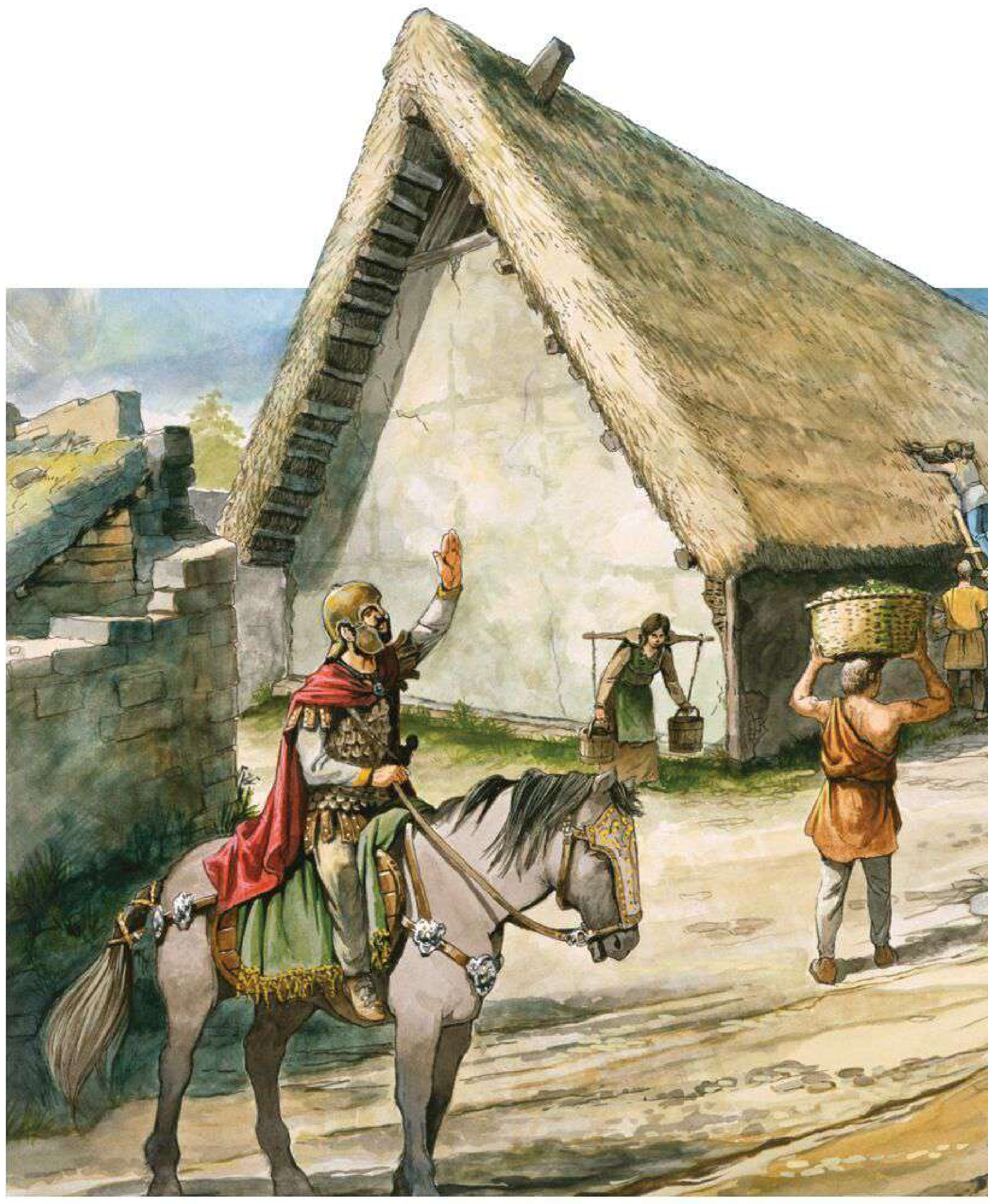
In 476, Odoacer forced the Western Roman emperor, Romulus Augustulus, to abdicate, making himself king of Italy

By 455, the Western Roman Empire was crumbling – it had lost huge swathes of territory in Britain, Gaul, Spain and much of North Africa. That year, Rome was sacked once again, this time by the Vandals, led by Genseric. They ravaged the city for two weeks, stripping it of all its treasures and wealth – so rapaciously that the act gave rise to the term 'vandalism'. Everything from gilded roof tiles and furniture to the empire's most ancient relics were stolen, and hauled off to Carthage.

Despite the best efforts of the Eastern Emperor Leo to restore the West to its former glory, in 476, it was finally dealt its death blow by Odoacer, a German warrior who had risen through the ranks of the Roman military. Declared king by his men, he overthrew and banished the Western emperor, Romulus Augustulus, who had been placed on the throne by his since-executed father. As king of Italy, though Odoacer pledged himself to the Eastern emperor Zeno, he did not recognise the authority of the Western emperor, Julius Nepos, who Augustulus had deposed. By his murder in 493, the Western Empire had officially dissolved – leaving just the Byzantines remaining in the East.



The usurper, Maximus, took the legion from Chester to Gaul to wage war with Gratian, leaving the great fort abandoned



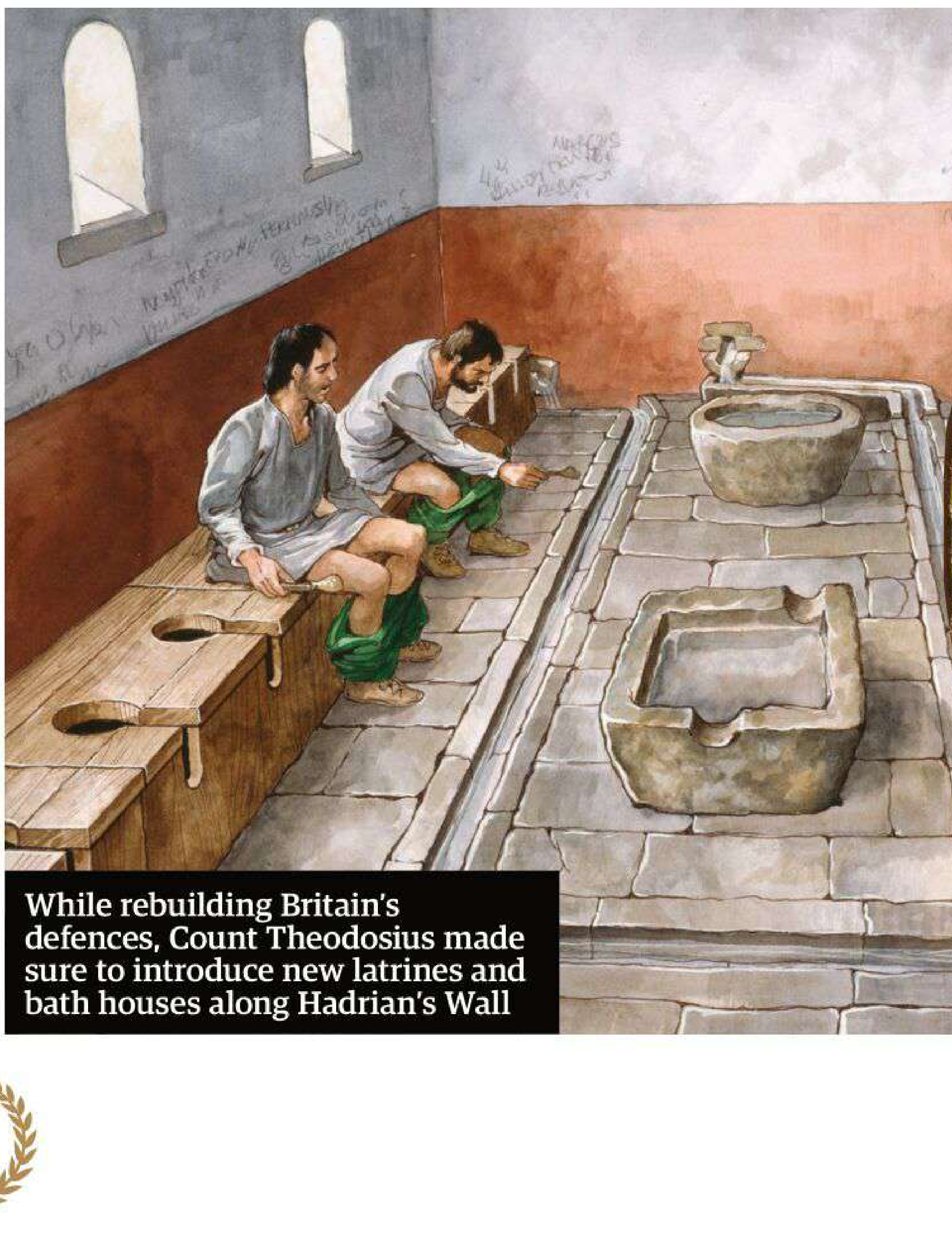
olive branch to Alaric, asking him to seize Epirus. However, his plot was thwarted by an enormous horde of Vandals, Alani and Suevi, who crossed through the vacuum left atop the now-frozen Rhine, and proceeded to lay waste to the empire's neglected Western provinces. As they ravaged the land and its people, reaching as far as Spain, the Burgundians and Alamanni spilled over the border to Upper Germany.

Having been stripped of its defences, Britain was now entirely cut off from the empire. Roman coins had stopped flowing across the Channel years prior, and there were no Roman mints left on the island. With no supply chain, the few remaining soldiers scattered across 100 British forts survived on what little the surrounding countryside could provide. Under the strain, peasants deserted their land, and soldiers increasingly turned to banditry, shrivelling away, deserter by deserter. Desperate, the Romans left in Britain voted in a new government, appointing Marcus their emperor. He was outraged that the Romans had left Britain to be picked apart by the likes of the Irish high king, Niall of the Nine Hostages. However, he was promptly assassinated, succeeded by a native member of the urban aristocracy, Gratian, who, despite having a personal guard, was also murdered just four months later. Finally, the mantle fell to the auspiciously named Constantine, who fashioned himself Constantine III, in the lineage of the 'Great' leader himself.

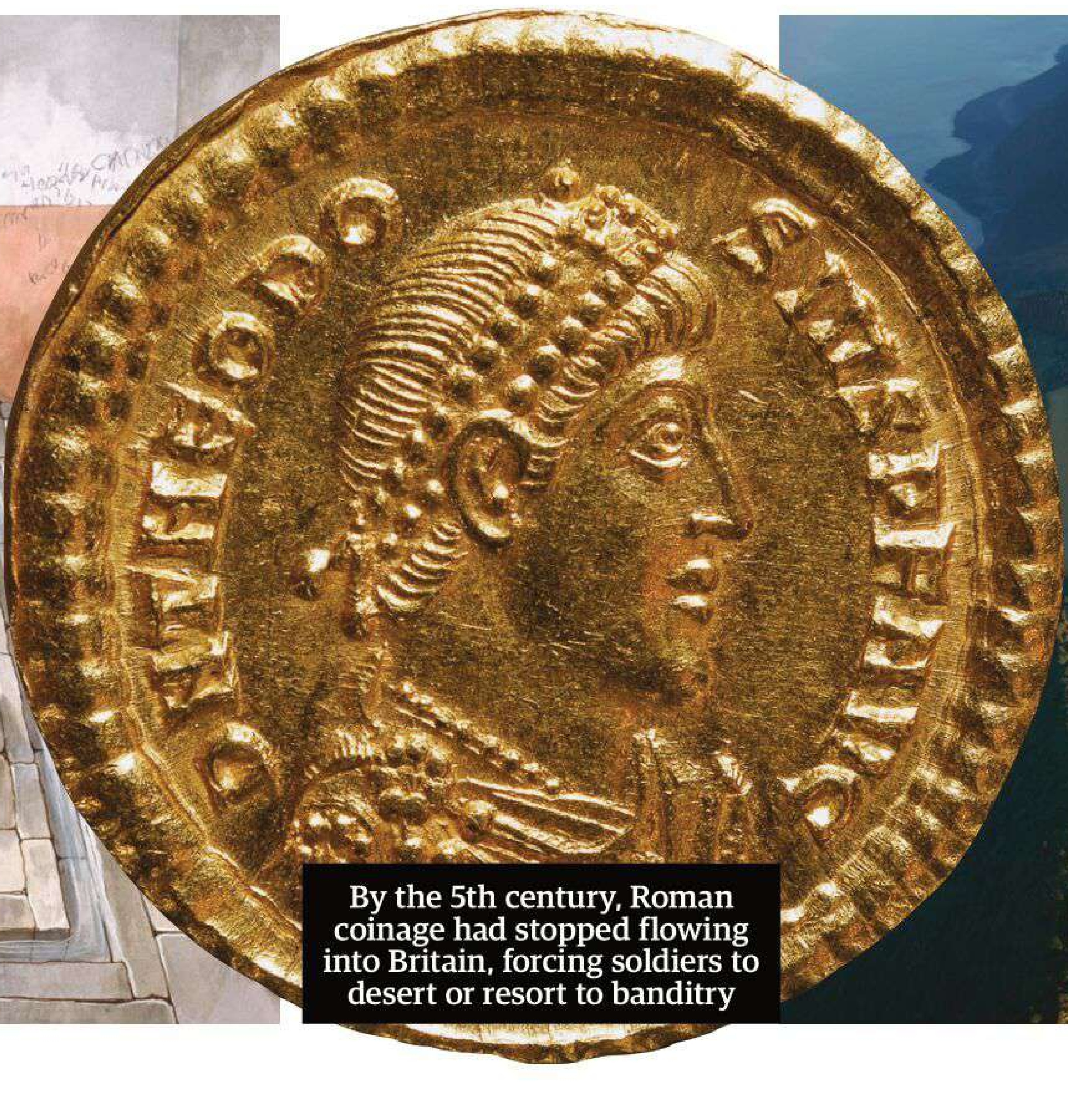
Not content to rule over the island, Constantine fixed his gaze eastward. Entrusting two of his officers with the defence of Britain, he speedily crossed over to Gaul, where he planned to draw the fragmented legions to his cause, reclaim Gaul and Spain, and make a move on Honorius' title. The barbarian horde had since fragmented into raiding parties, allowing Constantine to rush past the Rhine, fortifying it where possible, on the way to the Alps. Alarmed at the speed of Constantine's success, Honorius put a Gothic chief in charge of the West's defence – though he was promptly pushed back into Italy.

Meanwhile, tired of waiting for Stilicho's reinforcements, in the winter of 408, Alaric withdrew from Epirus and sent him the bill for his stay. Stilicho presented this to the senate, warning that the only alternative was war, and they agreed to send 4,000 pounds of gold. In the wake of the scandal, the senate and army began to slip from Stilicho's once-tight grip. The death of the Eastern emperor, Arcadius, only served to further shake things up. While Honorius hoped to rapidly travel to Constantinople to unify the two realms, Stilicho convinced him to let him go instead. Along the way, rumours broke out that he intended to place his own son on the Eastern throne, causing Honorius' soldiers to break out and murder his guardian's loyal supporters. With a warrant out for his arrest, Stilicho returned to Ravenna, hiding in a church until the emperor promised to pardon him. As soon as he emerged, he learned that, despite assurances, Honorius had instructed his men to execute him on sight. Ordering his own men to stand down, he was killed without resistance.

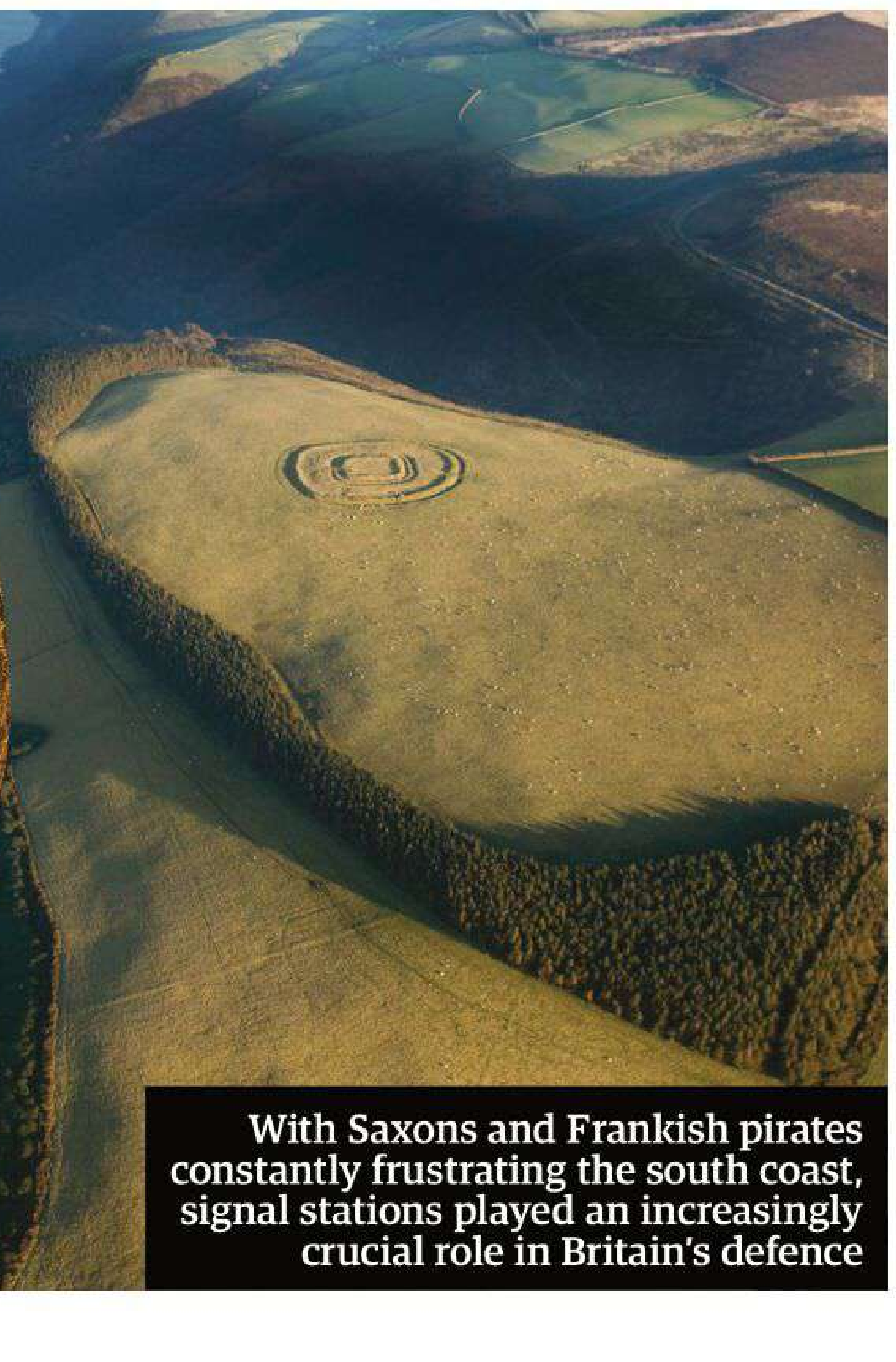
In the aftermath, Honorius butchered scores of Stilicho's officers and their families, sending 30,000 frightened former foederati Goths to Alaric's side. With Stilicho dead, his plan to send



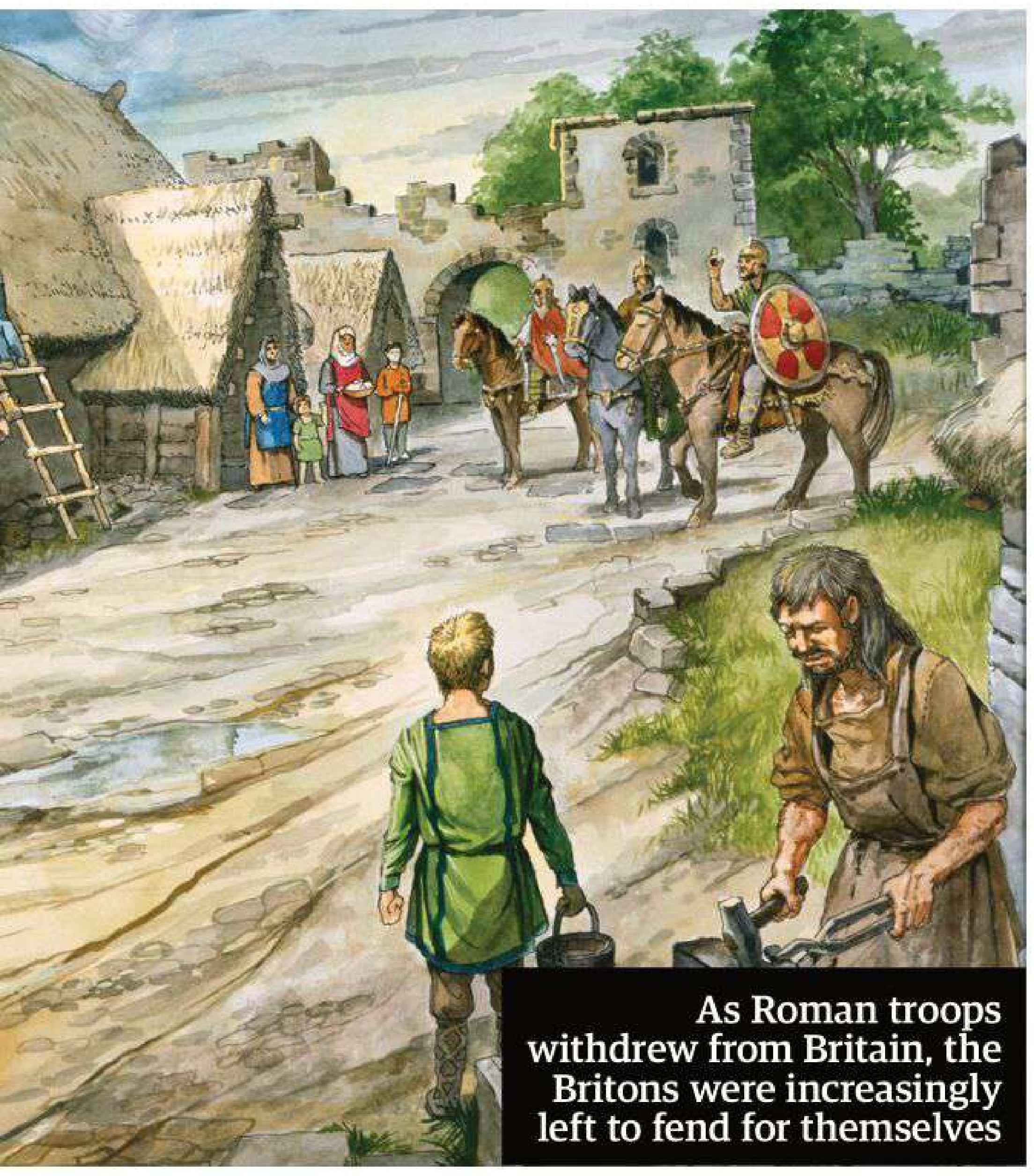
While rebuilding Britain's defences, Count Theodosius made sure to introduce new latrines and bath houses along Hadrian's Wall



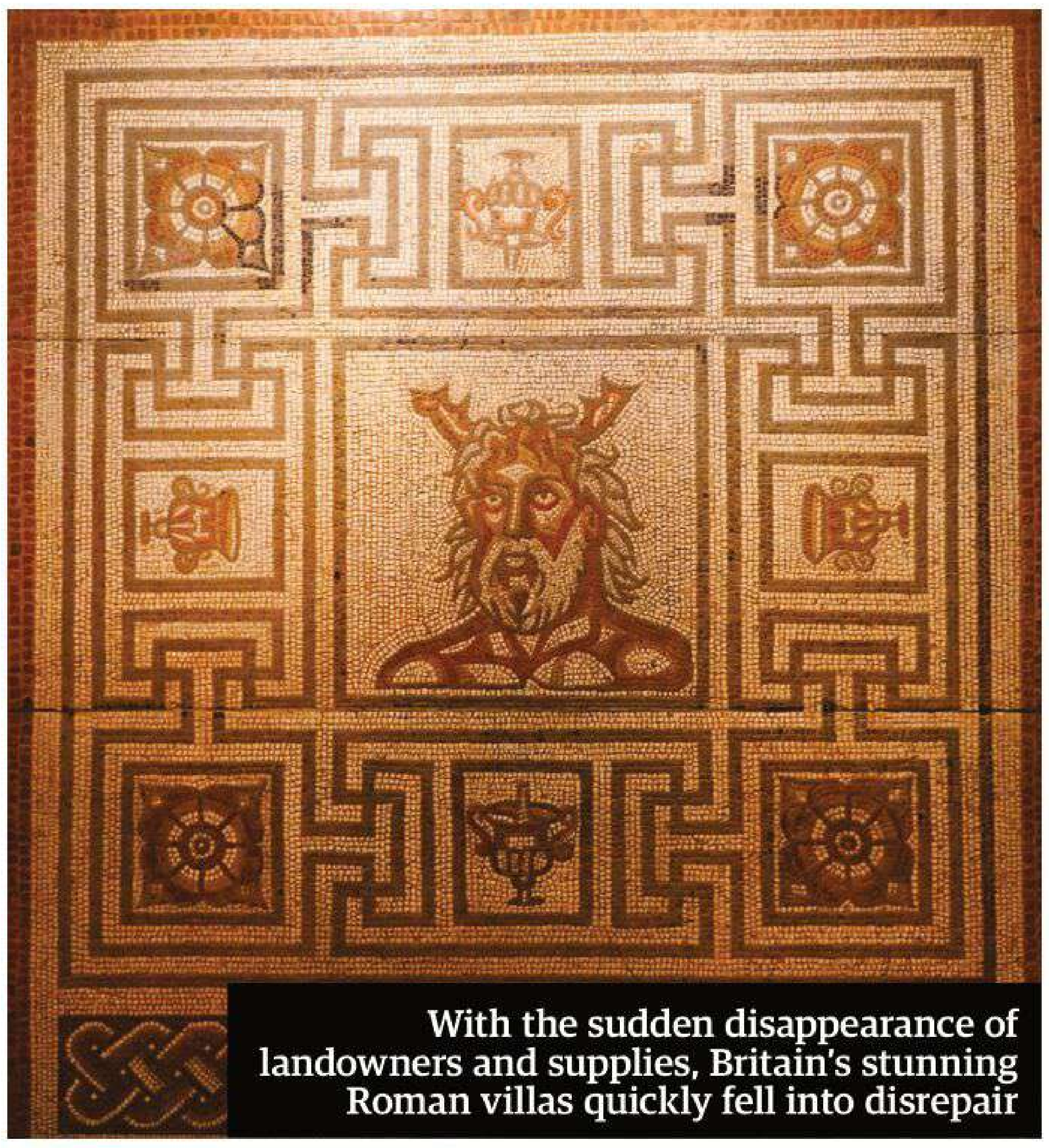
By the 5th century, Roman coinage had stopped flowing into Britain, forcing soldiers to desert or resort to banditry



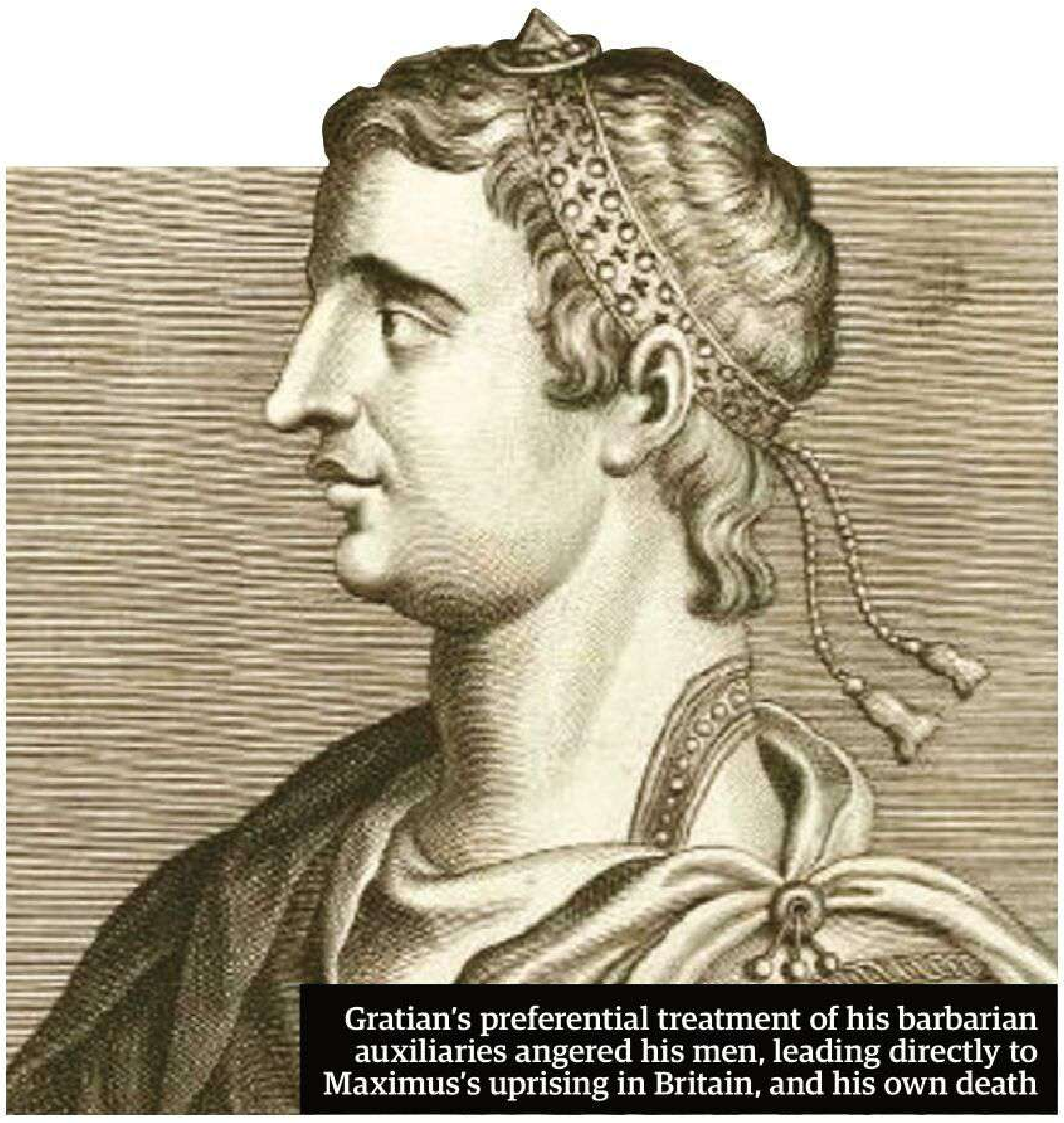
With Saxons and Frankish pirates constantly frustrating the south coast, signal stations played an increasingly crucial role in Britain's defence



As Roman troops withdrew from Britain, the Britons were increasingly left to fend for themselves

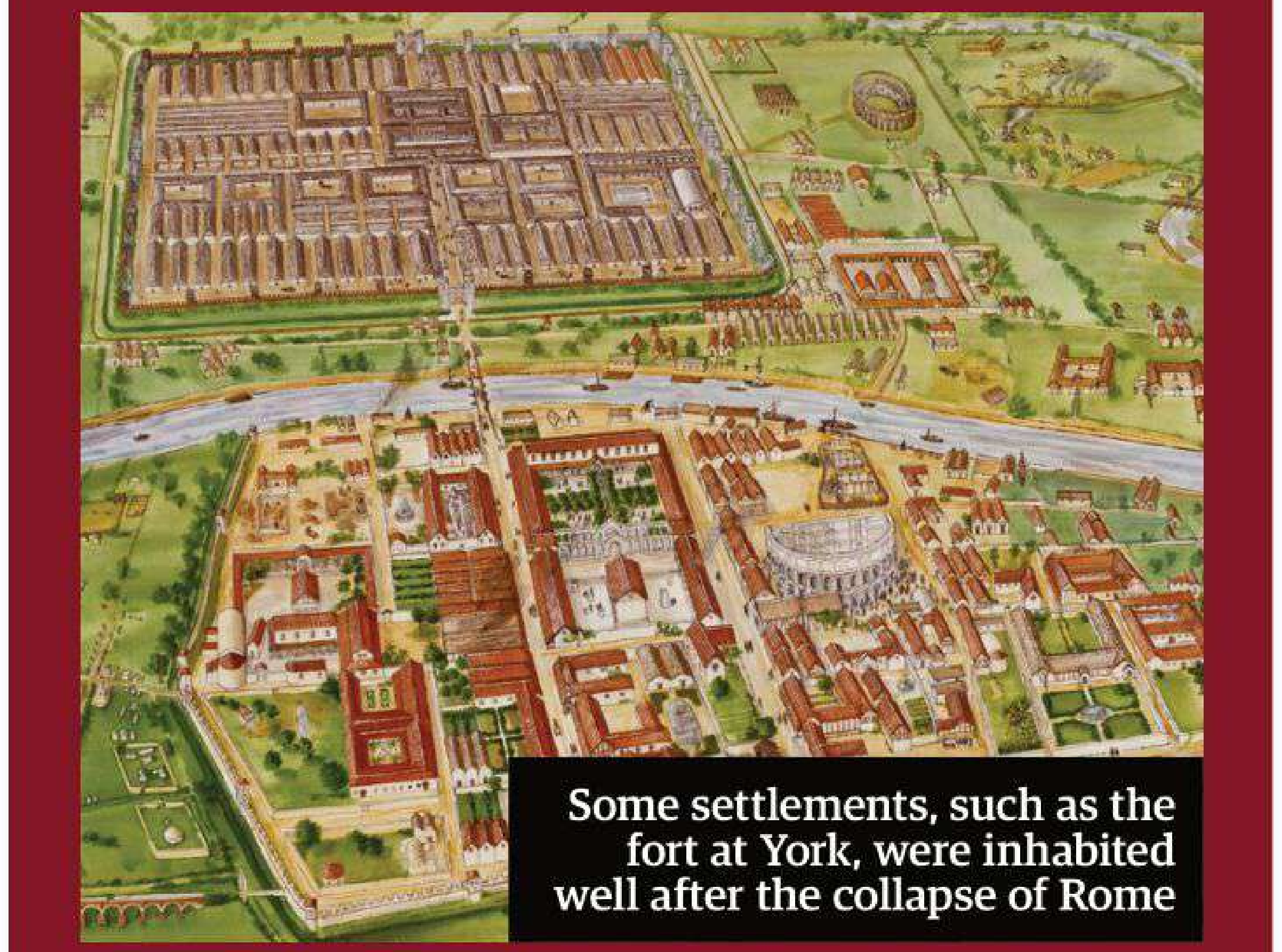


With the sudden disappearance of landowners and supplies, Britain's stunning Roman villas quickly fell into disrepair



Gratian's preferential treatment of his barbarian auxiliaries angered his men, leading directly to Maximus's uprising in Britain, and his own death

THE FATE OF ROME'S BRITISH SETTLEMENTS



Some settlements, such as the fort at York, were inhabited well after the collapse of Rome

While Rome's British fortifications began to collapse, not all suffered the same fate. Though many were very quickly deserted, larger settlements, such as Verulamium and Cirencester, as well as the smaller towns of Catterick and Dorchester on Thames all continued to exist for decades. However, needs facilitated a shift in how spaces were used.

At Verulamium, one large villa, which once hosted a giant mosaic, now had a corn-drying oven in its place – indicating that, with a breakdown of order, there was a greater sense of urgency in gathering harvests and hiding them behind protected walls. The villa was later knocked down and replaced by a large barn, built using Roman methods, but with broken tiles salvaged from earlier buildings. The site also hosted a network of wooden pipelines with iron-collared joints – indicating that the town's Roman aqueducts and fountains were still working.

As trade broke down, landowners fled, and towns became increasingly isolated – shifting to localised sources of protection and authority. However, even these eventually broke down, with some, such as Caistor by Norwich, possibly wiped out in massacres. Others, including Canterbury and Dorchester on Thames, were bolstered by new Germanic settlers. York's bustling Roman fort, meanwhile, was maintained for centuries.

the Visigoth leader to fight Constantine in Gaul fell apart. Annoyed by this lost opportunity, Alaric instead offered to return to Pannonia, in return for gold and hostages. Frustrated with the Romans' indecisiveness, he invited his brother-in-law, the Ostrogoth Ataulf, to join him in marching on Rome itself, sacking every castle and town along the way. Under siege, the Romans soon began to starve, with bodies rotting in the street. When they defiantly warned Alaric that every citizen was ready for war, Alaric laughed: "The thickest grass is more easy to cut than the thinnest." Eventually, they acquiesced, handing the Goths 5,000 pounds of gold, 30,000 pounds of silver, various other luxurious commodities and a treaty, backed by hostages.

After Alaric's withdrawal, Honorius was so desperate, he recognised Constantine as his fellow emperor, in return for help against the Goths. However, when Honorius had his Master of the Horse executed, Constantine withdrew back into Gaul – wary of either facing Alaric in battle, or his fellow emperor's frivolous temper. When Alaric made further demands, Honorius refused them all, triggering another siege of Rome, resulting in the senate forming a new government with Alaric, led by an emperor of the Goth's choosing. However, the experiment ended in disaster, as Alaric stripped his new emperor of his post and, fed up with trying to negotiate with Honorius, marched on Rome for a third time. Sacking, looting and burning the city for three days, this was the cathartic culmination of a lifetime of attempts to secure land for his people. He died soon after, succeeded by his brother-in-law, who led the Goths into Gaul. Procopius writes that Honorius was so foolish that when a eunuch told him that Rome had perished, he thought his favourite chicken (called Rome) had died, and replied: "And yet it has just eaten from my hands!"

Meanwhile, Constantine's son, Constans, learned that his Spanish garrison had betrayed him, opening it up to the Vandals, Sueves and Alani. To make matters worse, the emperor's most senior general had declared his own son, Maximus, emperor – who, joined by barbarians in 411, defeated and killed Constans at Vienna. Honorius dispatched an army to deal with all the Western usurpers, first wiping out Maximus and his father, whose men immediately defected back to the imperial army, and then going after Constantine. After besieging his capital of Arelate, in southern Gaul, and defeating a relief army, he captured the pretender, who, hoping to save his skin, cast aside his imperial regalia and had himself ordained. Though this stunt may have saved his soul, it did not save his life, and he was executed on the way back to Italy.

In Constantine's absence, the Saxons attacked Britain once again. Left defenceless, the Britons took matters into their own hands, arming themselves and fighting off the invaders. Having succeeded, they ejected Constantine's administrators and, by extension, cast off the imperial yoke and its laws, inspiring peasant rebellions across Gaul. Despite their best efforts, the unwarlike Britons were no match for the waves of hardened Saxon warriors, buffeting the island's shores. Hoping to normalise relations with the legitimate emperor, the Britons wrote to Honorius, imploring him to come to the island's defence. However, facing overwhelming problems of his own, the emperor replied that they should "look after their own defence".

Having been truly torn from the empire, Romano-British civilisation completely collapsed – the frontier forts and walls were abandoned, left to stone-robbers; towns were deserted and torn down for scrap; stunning villas fell into disrepair; mines and quarries shut down; and mass-production pottery kilns simply disappeared. The Western Roman Empire would only survive another 65 years, before being dismantled by the east Germanic general, Odoacer. In the ensuing power vacuum, the barbarians who had once been content to raid British soil would soon decide to settle upon it. With everything up for grabs and no great benefactor to summon, the Britons united behind petty tyrants, battling among themselves and foreign invaders for dominance over a new, unpredictable order.

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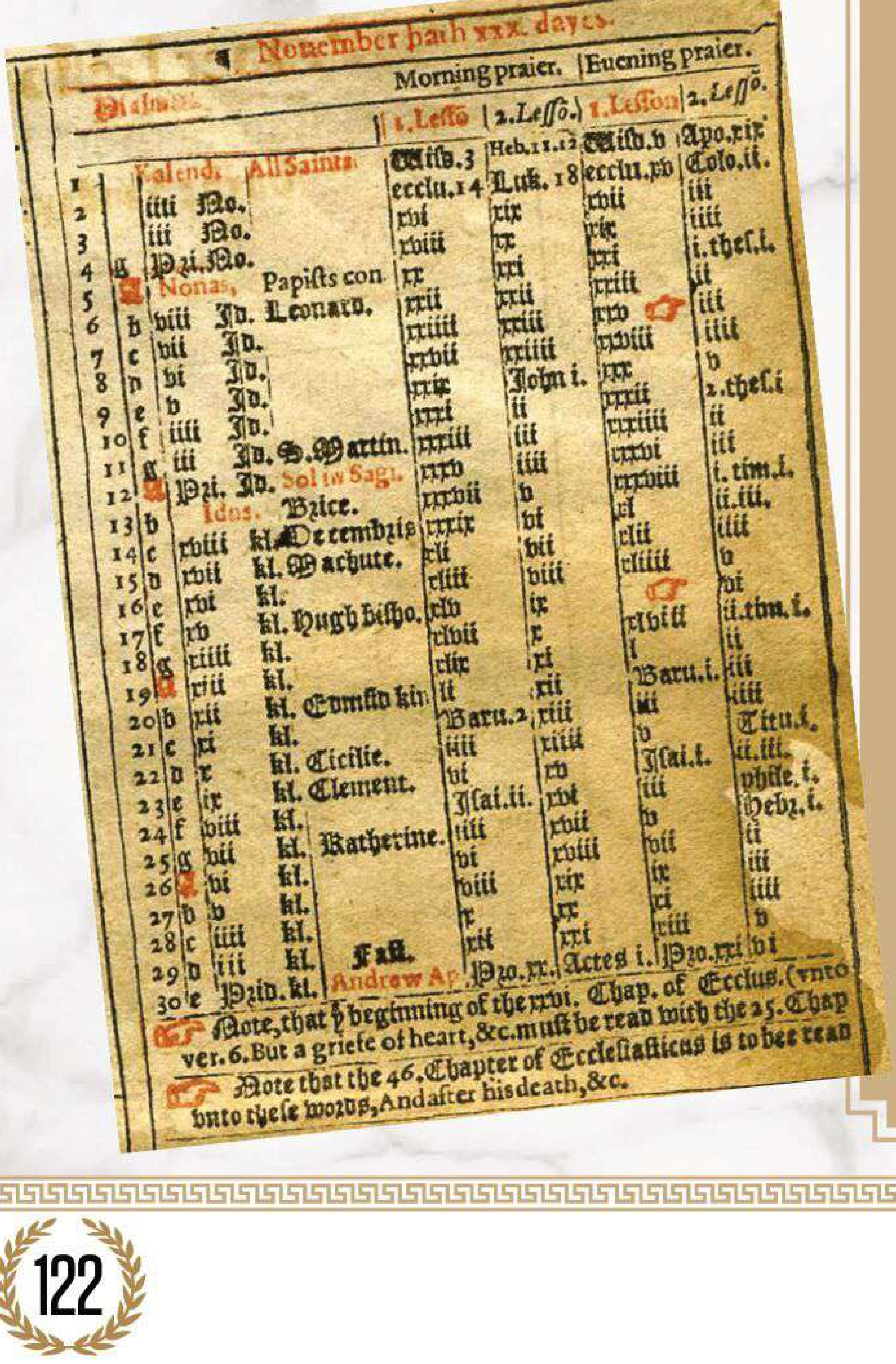
ROMAN INVENTIONS

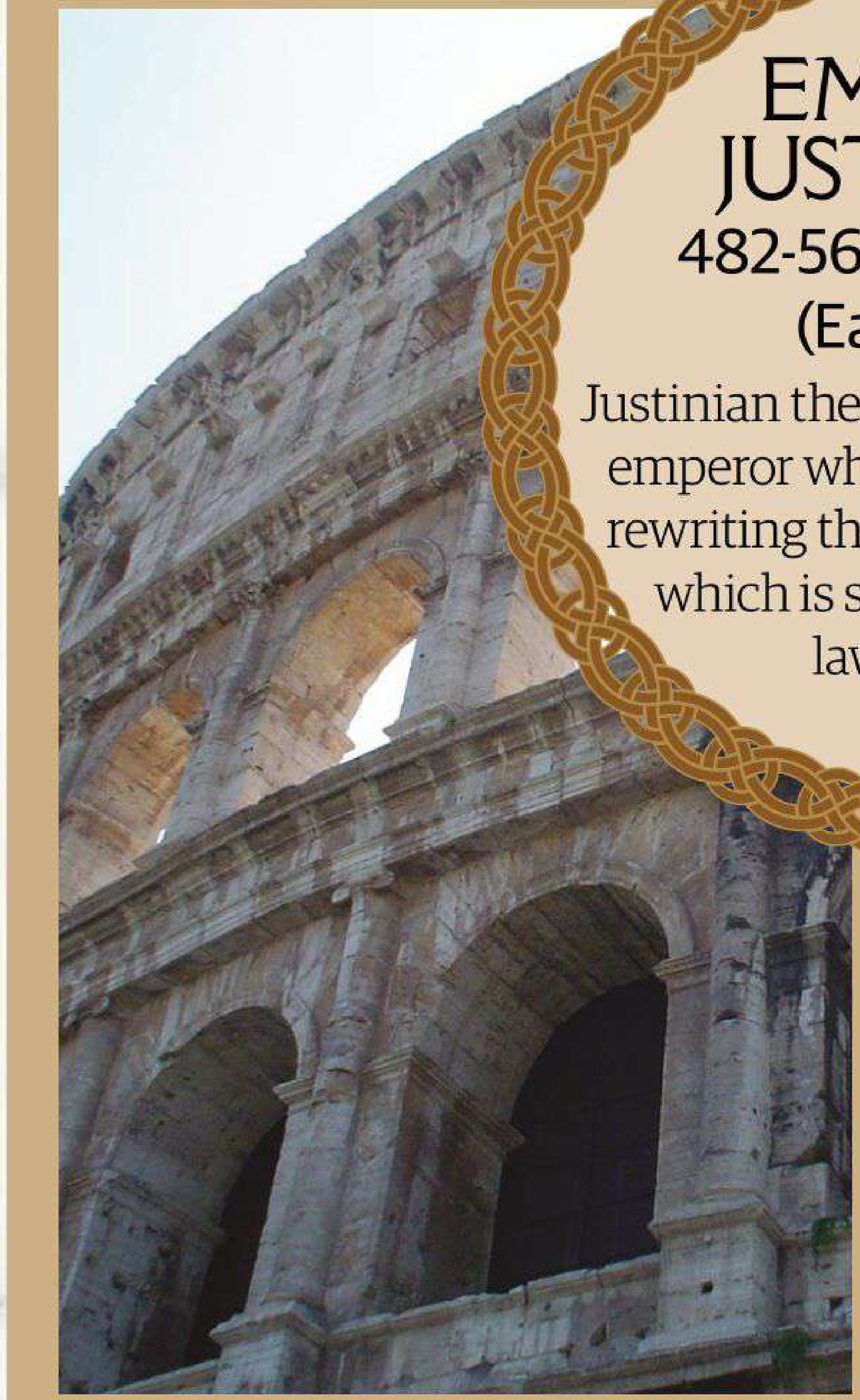
What did the Romans ever do for us? Well, they banished diseases, built roads and invented the welfare system – and that's just the start!

CALENDARS

Year invented/first used: 46 BCE

Early Roman calendars were taken from Greek models that operated around the lunar cycle. However, being a superstitious lot, the Romans considered even numbers unlucky and so altered the calendar to ensue that each month contained an odd number of days. Then in 46 BCE, Julius Caesar, along with the astronomer Sosigenes, devised the Julian system to align the calendar with the solar year. During this process, the 12 months – including July, named after Caesar – as we know them today in the Gregorian calendar, were included and the number of days in a year increased from 355 to 365.





CONCRETE

Year invented/first used: Around 2,100 years ago

Structures such as the Colosseum and the Pantheon bare testament to the Romans being great architects and highly prolific builders, but the fact that they are still standing today, thousands of years later, is thanks to an early form of cement known as opus caementicium. Created from a recipe of slaked lime and volcanic ash to form a sticky paste that was then mixed with volcanic rocks, this cement set quickly to enable the construction of some truly incredible buildings.

EMPEROR JUSTINIAN I

482-565 CE, Byzantine (East Roman)

Justinian the Great was a Byzantine emperor who was responsible for rewriting the Corpus Juris Civilis, which is still the basis of civil law in the UK.

ROADS

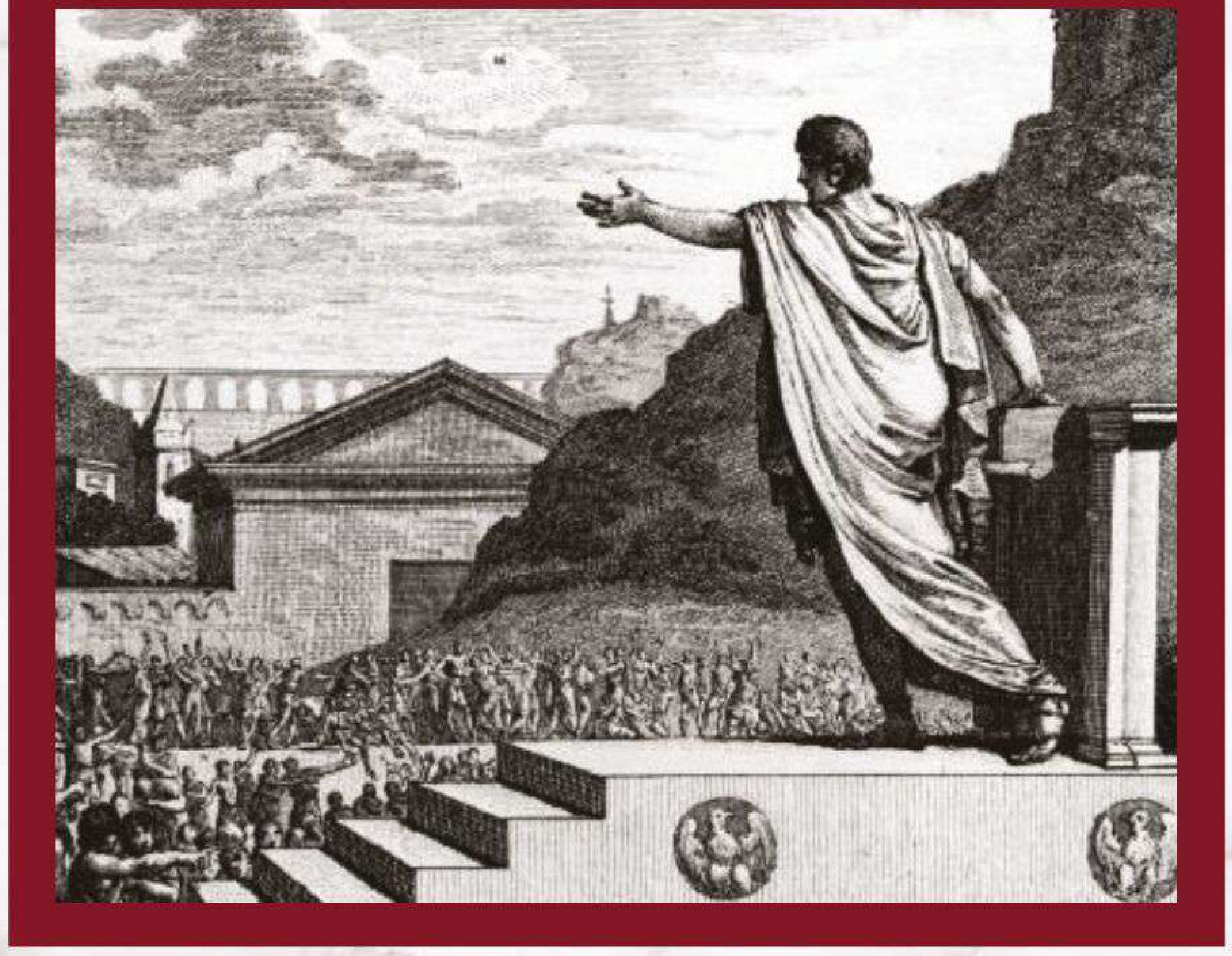
Year invented/first used: 500 BCE

Developed as a means for the military machine to get around quickly, over 50,000 miles of paved roads were built by the Romans, with 29 major highways going into Rome alone. Constructed from dirt, gravel and bricks, the Roman roads were so sturdy that many are still used today and were built with curvature to allow for water drainage. With the Roman legion able to travel about 25 miles a day, these roads helped the empire expand over most of southern Europe.

A WELFARE SYSTEM

Year invented/first used: 122 BCE

Government programs that provide subsidised food, education and other expenses for the less well-off can be traced back to Ancient Rome. These entitlement schemes were first introduced by tribune Gaius Graccshus, who ordered that Rome's government supply its citizens with cheap grain. This welfare system continued under Trajan, whose alimenta program was introduced to feed, clothe and educate orphans and under-privileged children. A token system also allowed cheap access to corn, oil, wine and bread for the needy.



NEWSPAPERS

Year invented/used: 131 BCE

Though it is hard to imagine the Romans delighting in an early form of celebrity tittle-tattle via some ancient form of *The Sun*, they did inscribe texts detailing military, legal and civil issues onto metal or stone and made them accessible to the public. Known as acta diurna, or daily acts, these early newspapers included details of Roman military victories, birth and death notices and the results of gladiatorial bouts, and they were posted in heavily populated areas for the public to digest and discuss.

ARCHES & AQUEDUCTS

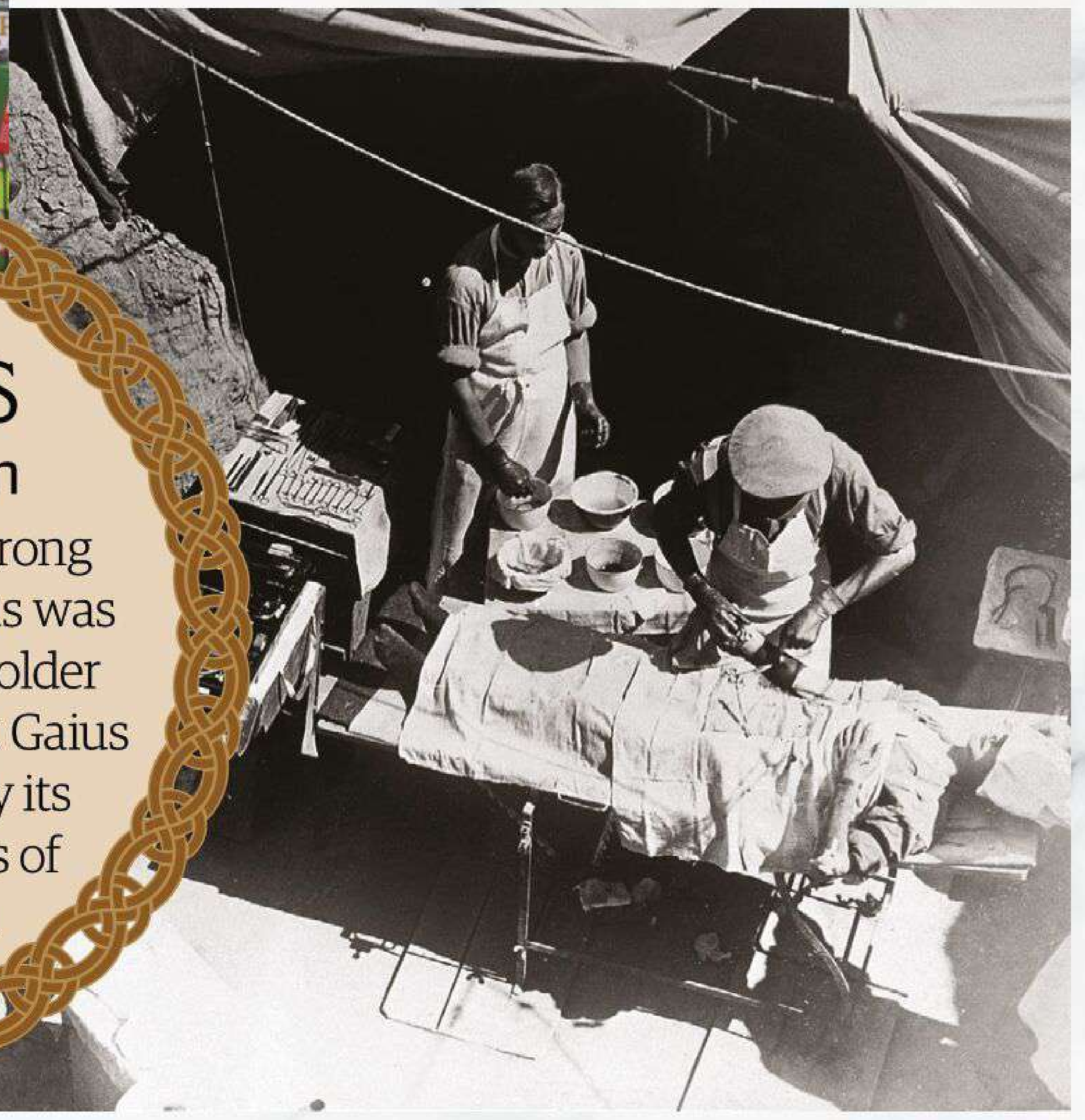
Year invented/used: 312 BCE

Roman architects discovered that a structural arch could support a great weight and so these were used throughout the empire to create buildings that were not only stunning to look at, but structurally sturdy to withstand the test of time. Arches were also crucial to aqueducts as they could help raise a structure up to create a downward slope that would allow water to trickle in to a desired location. Even a fleeting glance at Roman architecture will testify the importance of arches in all walks of Roman life.

GAIUS GRACCHUS

154-121 BCE, Roman

Born into a family with strong political connections, Gaius was heavily influenced by his older sibling's reformative policy. Gaius instituted a law to supply its citizens with allotments of cheaply priced grain.



SEWERS

Year invented/first used: 735 BCE

While aqueducts were developed by the Romans to allow fresh water to flow into Roman cities, the Romans also developed early sewers systems to take human waste out of the cities to eradicate the risk of contaminating clean water. In Rome alone there were seven major sewers running out of the city (which can still be found under the city to this day) and sewer systems were also incorporated into other large cities around the empire.

FIELD SURGERY

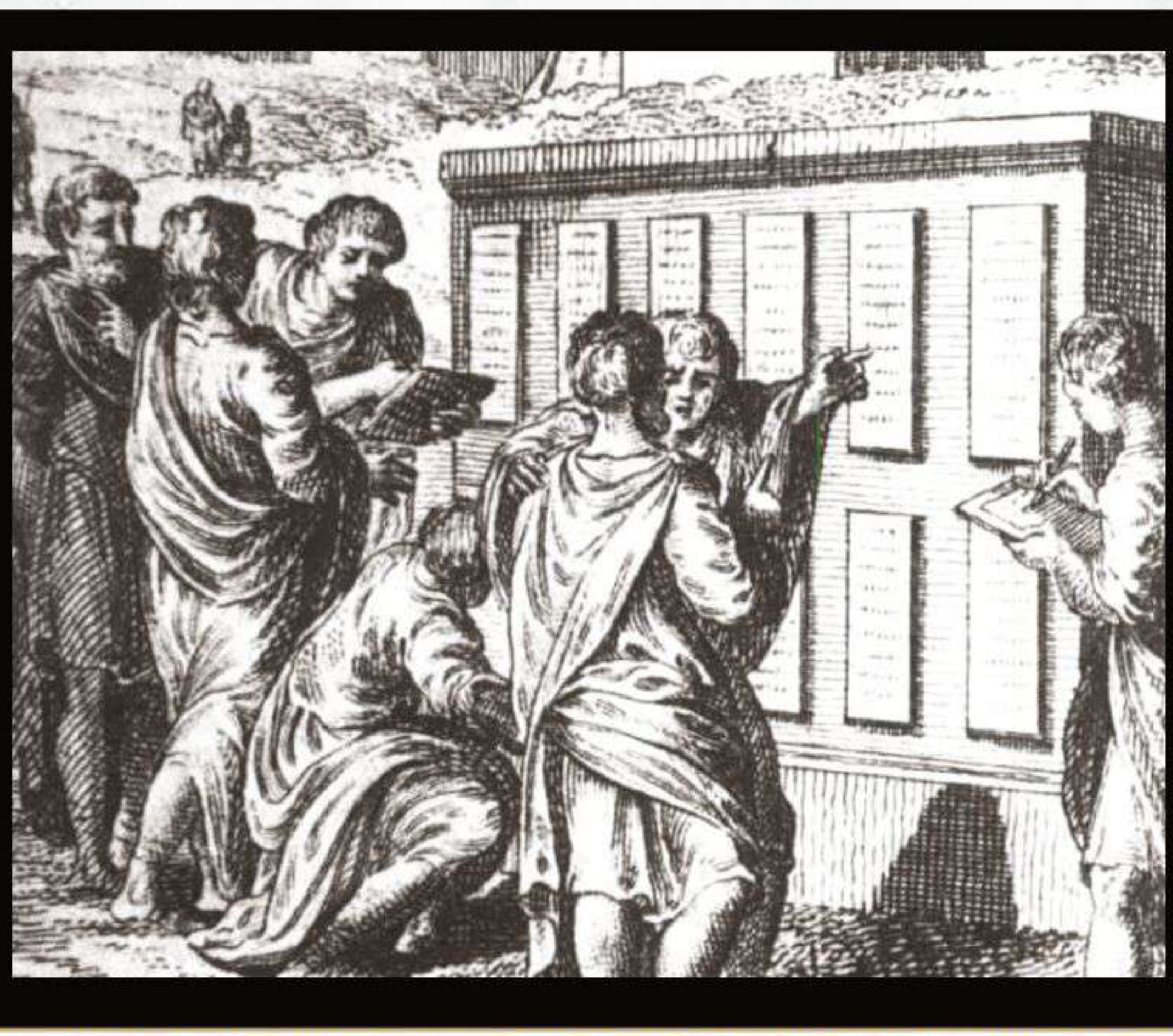
Year invented/first used: Unknown

The Romans made many breakthroughs in medicine, such as pioneering the use of the cesarean section and developing many surgical tools. However, it was in establishing a military medical corps that was perhaps their greatest medical innovation as it meant that soldiers in their garrisons could be treated on the field of combat, and countless lives saved through the use of hemostatic tourniquets and arterial surgical clamps to stem the loss of blood. The Romans even had the foresight to sterilise their tools in hot water.

BOUND BOOKS

Year invented/first used: 1 CE

Up until the Roman Empire, literature took on the form of heavy clay tablets and scrolls, but the Romans managed to streamline this medium by creating the codex, which was a stack of bound pages. Early codices consisted of bound wax tablets, but these were shortly replaced by animal skin parchment that was more akin to book pages. According to historians, Caesar created an early version of a codex by stacking pages of a papyrus, but bound codices didn't become the norm in Rome until at least the first century.



THE TWELVE TABLES

Year invented/first used: 450 BCE

Much of early Roman law came from the Twelve Tables, a code that formed part of the constitution during the republican era. In fact, many of the legal terms taken from this code, such as subpoena, pro bono and affidavit, are still used in modern law. The Twelve Tables contained laws relating to property, religion and divorce and also detailed appropriate punishments for a wide range of crimes, from petty theft to witchcraft. Developed slightly later was the Corpus Juris Civilis, a more streamlined document that first introduced the notion of innocent until proven guilty.

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Though Britain's magnificent Roman villas fell into disrepair, the Britons and Anglo-Saxons repurposed many of them

BRITAIN AFTER THE ROMANS

Britain's great exit from the Roman Empire saw its civilisation completely collapse before being subjugated and rebuilt by a new master

Written by Hareth Al Bustani

At the turn of the 5th century, when the self-styled emperor Constantine III left for Gaul, he took with him virtually all of Britain's remaining Roman soldiers. His departure set the island adrift from the empire, tearing the foundations out from beneath British civilisation and causing a total military, economic, sociological and cultural collapse. The glue of Roman authority, holding the south together, had finally worn out, giving the Britons a matinee performance of the sun setting over the Roman Empire, and a glimpse of the dangers lurking in the night.

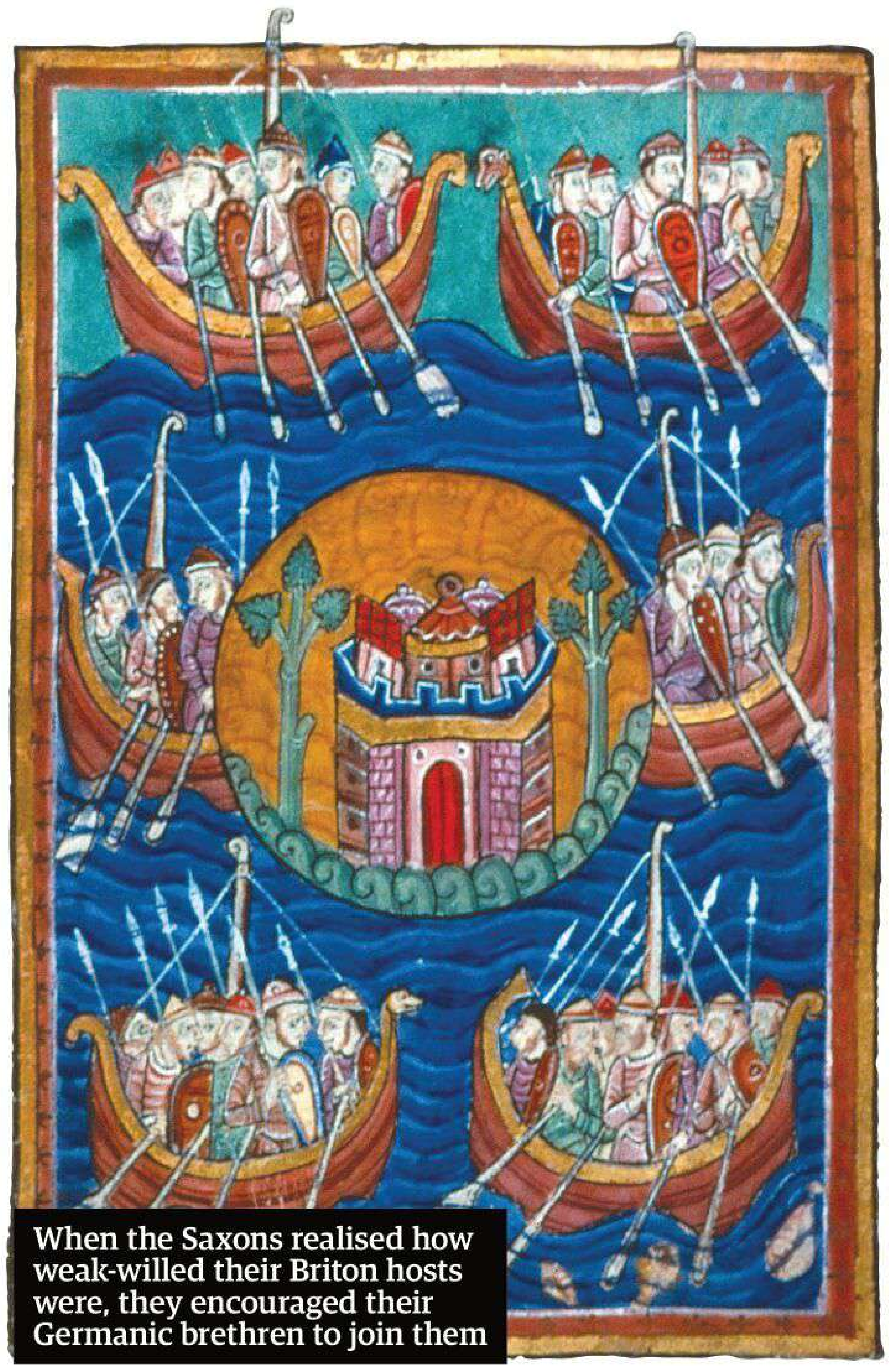
Having heard of Honorius' abandonment of Britain, the barbarians attacked with greater vigour than ever. With no one manning Hadrian's wall or the coastal signal towers the Britons were assaulted on all fronts by Picts, Scots and Saxons keen to drain what few riches might remain in the former Roman frontier. Lacking military knowledge and experience, the unwarlike defenders scattered into the woods. With no standing army to enforce order, the country fell into anarchy. Aristocrats, who had not seen new coins in years, hoarded and buried their wealth, never to be found. The former Roman socialites who did not flee voluntarily were in for a rude awakening when they were hauled from their villas by marauding bands, slapped into shackles and sold into slavery.

The whetstone found at Sutton Hoo may have been inspired by Roman ceremonial sceptres, projecting prestige

Desperate, the Britons wrote to the Romans for a second time, begging for help from Aetius, the Roman consul commanding the legions in Gaul. Unfortunately the Romans were still in no position to spare any troops. Towns were quickly deserted as Romano-British society devolved into a rural-based economy. The Britons huddled together behind scores of tyrants ruling a network of petty kingdoms centred around southwest England and Wales, such as Anglesey, Dumnonia, Demetae and Powys. They re-embraced traditional hilltop settlements like the Iron Age hillfort at South Cadbury, with an innermost rampart 1,100 metres long, reinforced with earth and timber. From the far-flung western settlements of Wroxeter and Exeter to the eastern towns of Canterbury and Winchester, stone houses were replaced by weaker timber structures, if not abandoned completely.

Roman industries collapsed and the manufacture of iron farm tools, bronze figurines, wooden furniture, gilt jewellery and bone pins all disappeared along with the other symbols of civilisation: markets, architecture and art. The Britons now had to import Mediterranean, Irish and Anglo-Saxon pottery, or make their own crude impressions at home. Welsh bronzesmiths, however, had no qualms – they had protected their traditional metalwork techniques for centuries, and finally there was a gap in the market. Celtic religion also experienced a renaissance, with new sacred sites erected across the island.

As famine took hold, the cornered Britons emerged from their caves and hovels, took up arms and prepared for one last stand. They formed small bands, uniting behind their strongest warriors, and pushed the invaders back beyond the border. Amazed at their latent strength, the Britons enjoyed a brief period of renewed prosperity, soon discovering the deadly combination of abundance and militarism that had dragged the rest of the empire into such dire straits.



When the Saxons realised how weak-willed their Briton hosts were, they encouraged their Germanic brethren to join them

Over the course of centuries, the obscure figure of Ambrosius Aurelianus was immortalised through the mythical representations of Arthur and Merlin

FROM AMBROSIUS TO MERLIN

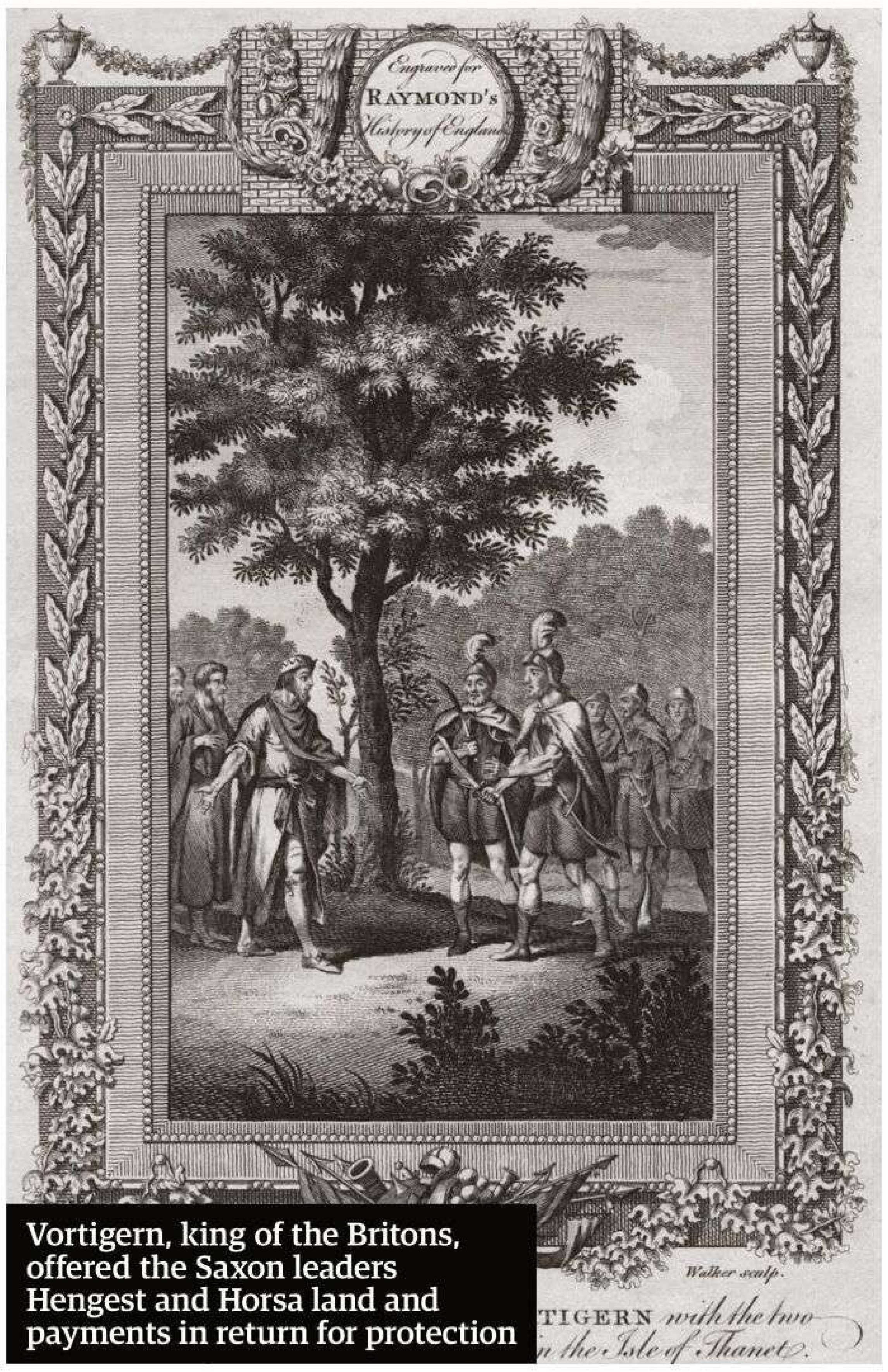
Though sub-Roman and early Medieval British history boasts a distinct lack of sources, the Briton monk Gildas left behind a contemporary account of the "ruin of Britain". While laden with scripture and conjecture, it also made the first mention of Ambrosius Aurelianus, the Roman who is said to have led the Britons to victory against their Saxon invaders – an account repeated by the 8th-century chronicler Bede.

The 9th-century Welsh scholar Nennius, meanwhile, painted the Dark Ages in a more colourful light. He not only referenced the fabled King Arthur for the first time, but credited him with the victory at Badon. Meanwhile, he presented Ambrosius as the adolescent son of a consul, a clairvoyant to whom Vortigern bequeathed western Britain.

Geoffrey of Monmouth's pseudohistorical *The History of the Kings of Britain* spun intricate, fantastical yarns about Ambrosius and Arthur. In his account, after the wicked King Vortigern assassinated his brother, Ambrosius fled to Brittany, returning to burn the evil monarch alive in his tower. Monmouth handed Ambrosius' powers to Merlin, a sorcerer, who assigned him quests such as retrieving magical stones.

In the absence of historicity, the obscure real-life hero Ambrosius was hence immortalised, inspiring the exploits of Arthur and Merlin, two of Britain's most beloved folk heroes.

"He would have to befriend another of Roman Britain's great enemies"



Vortigern, king of the Britons, offered the Saxon leaders Hengest and Horsa land and payments in return for protection

With no external enemy to repel and new riches to fight for, the island's various petty kings began waging war on one another. However, they soon found themselves decimated by another common foe, a great plague. At this critical juncture, the Picts decided to strike while the iron was hot, unleashing yet another bloodbath upon their southern prey.

By 449 CE, a Cornovian leader called Vortigern had united the south to become king of the Britons. While the tribes of Wales still produced the island's strongest armies, even these had been exhausted long before the pestilence hit. Though the Scots of Ireland had begun to pursue the path of diplomacy, having been introduced to Christianity by Saint Patrick, Vortigern knew the Picts would never succumb to reason. Furthermore, he had profited greatly since the split from Rome, and feared the empire might one day return to reclaim its territory.

Even at full strength, he didn't believe the Britons had the means to counter these combined threats. He would have to befriend another of Roman Britain's great enemies – the Saxons. Unlike the Gauls, Franks and even the Goths, the Saxons had remained true outsiders to the empire, tucked along the North Sea coast at the northernmost point of Germany. Gaul may have seemed a more sensible region to settle than Britain, given the latter's natural and Roman-built coastal defences. However, even after taking the northern third of Gaul, the Saxons could not compete with the Franks, who stamped their own supremacy over the region.

When the Saxon leaders Hengest and Horsa received a letter from Vortigern offering them the fertile eastern lands of Britain, plus regular payments, in return for their assistance in dealing with the troublesome Picts to the north, it was a no-brainer. No more would they have to engage in dangerous raiding expeditions for a mere pittance. The brothers immediately set sail with three ships, landing in Kent where they began to reap rewards.

When the Saxons learned how weak-willed their hosts truly were, they wrote home, encouraging their brethren to join them in settling along the eastern estuaries: the Thames, Humber and Wash. Eventually, having grown in number and confidence, and successfully having shut out the Picts, they decided to ask for a raise. Vortigern bestowed upon them increasingly lavish gifts, but it was never enough. Before long, he realised he had made a crucial mistake of letting the wolf into the hen house. When the Saxons broke out in rebellion against their Briton hosts, the latter had no answer.

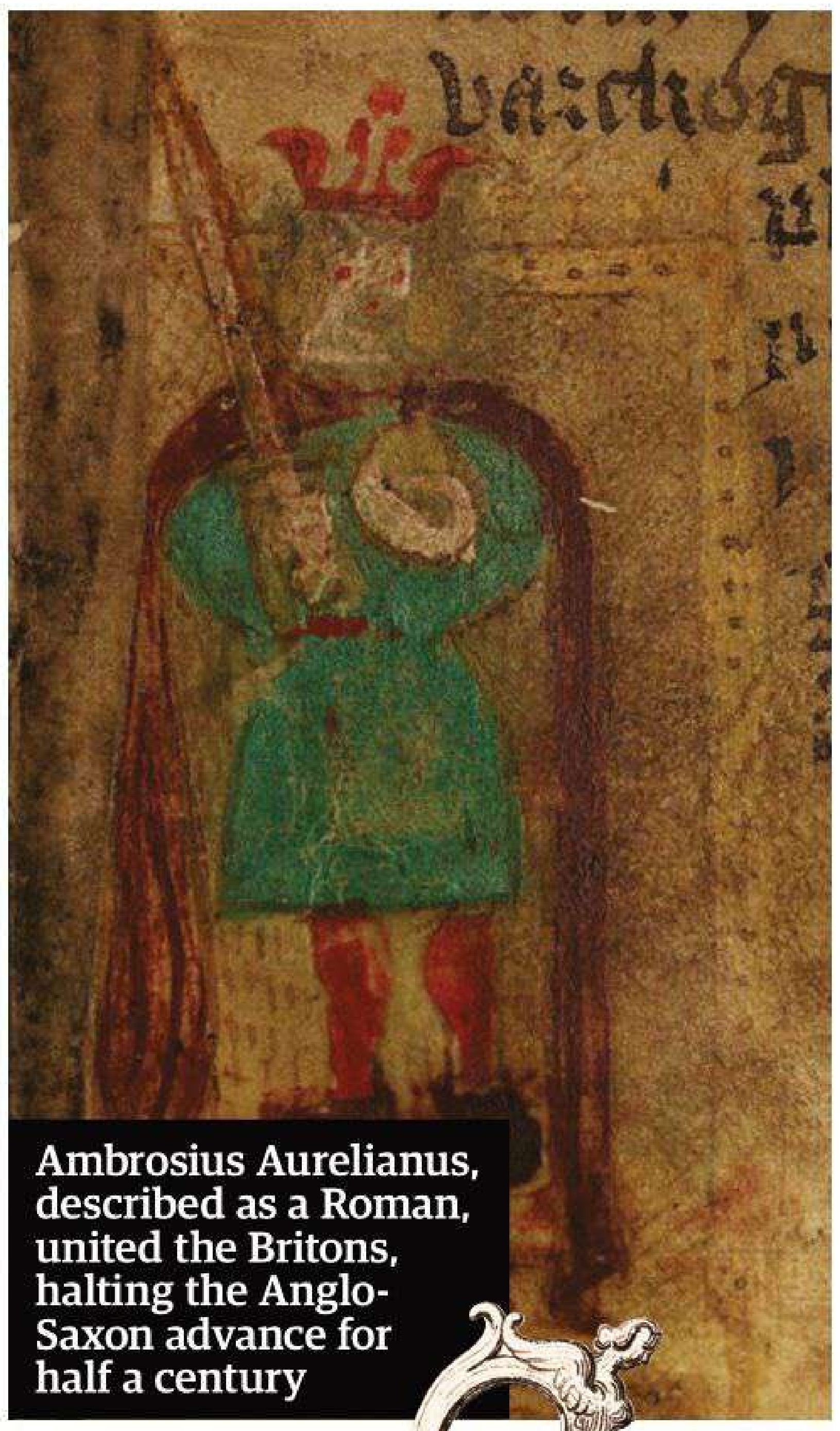
Though Horsa was supposedly killed in 455, his brother and son routed the Britons from Kent two years later before officially creating a kingdom there of their own. Sussex, too, was conquered by a different group of Saxons, where a policy of ethnic cleansing saw the Britons wiped out. Over the ensuing decades, the Saxons, Jutes and Angles continued to migrate to Britain, rampaging their way across England and Wales, murdering, pillaging and razing cities to the ground, all the way to the western sea. While the Saxons settled south of the River Humber, the Angles headed north and the Jutes took Hampshire.

Amid the desolation, a man of Roman – and some say imperial – descent stepped forwards. A Christian, Ambrosius Aurelianus had barely survived a previous invasion that had killed his parents. With an axe to grind, he took charge of the Britons, uniting the kingdoms behind his leadership and reorganising their defences. In around 500, he achieved the impossible: a victory over the invaders at the Battle of Badon, so profound it halted the Saxon advance for 40 years. During this time, chiefs Cerdic and his son Cynric conquered Wessex and the Isle of Wight, establishing another English kingdom there. Cynric's son Ceawlin would continue to subjugate the west, taking Durham, Gloucester, Cirencester and Bath, opening up the lower Severn to settlers and cutting off the Britons in southwest England from their Welsh counterparts.

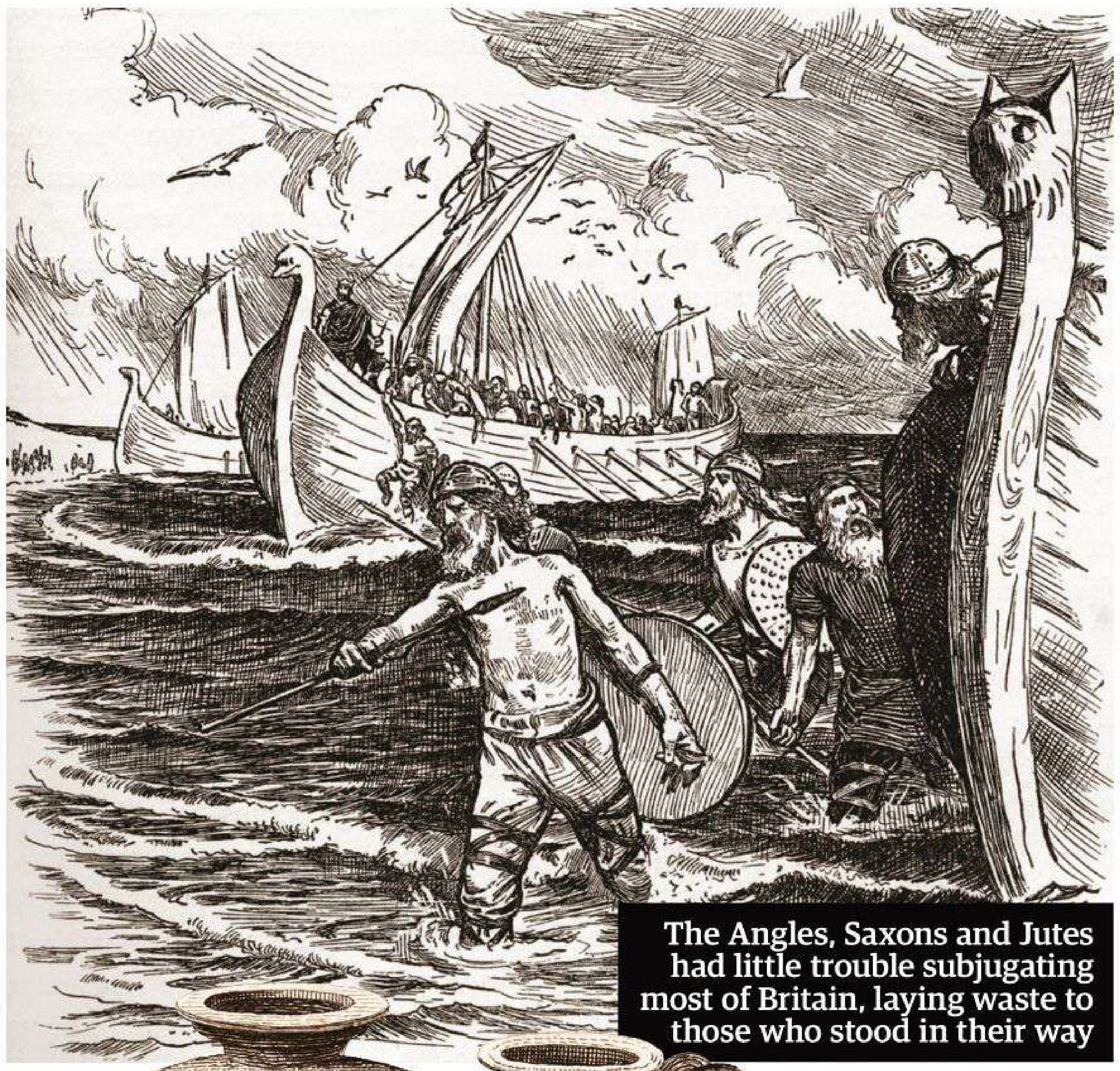
The Anglo-Saxons based themselves around settlements and infrastructure established by the Romans, ruling over a predominantly Romano-British population. While many Britons had fled across the Channel to Brittany as the dust settled, others simply adopted Anglo-Saxon customs, culture and language, as they had done with the Romans before. In turn, they played an active role in shaping their new domain. Like the Romans, the Anglo-Saxons based their large rural domains around central residences, or villas – the headquarters of royal administration where kings and their entourages feasted on the food rents they levied. They drew their provinces using Roman models, even using the Roman word for 'province'. Their great halls, meanwhile, married Germanic architecture with Romano-British traditions.

They also appear to have adopted Roman methods of projecting prestige, as travelling kings were accompanied by Roman-style banners and standard-bearers. The curious Sutton Hoo sceptre, of Celtic manufacture, featured eight carved heads and a stag surmounting it – a nod to the Roman staves of authority. English royals wore helmets and shoulder clasps inspired by Roman design, and even used Roman amphitheatres to host meetings. However, it was not until the arrival of Saint Augustine in 597 that the Anglo-Saxons were truly rekindled with the Roman past. For when the mission arrived in Kent under the orders of Pope Gregory, it not only brought the English pagans the Christian faith, but the tools of its preservation – the arts of reading and writing.

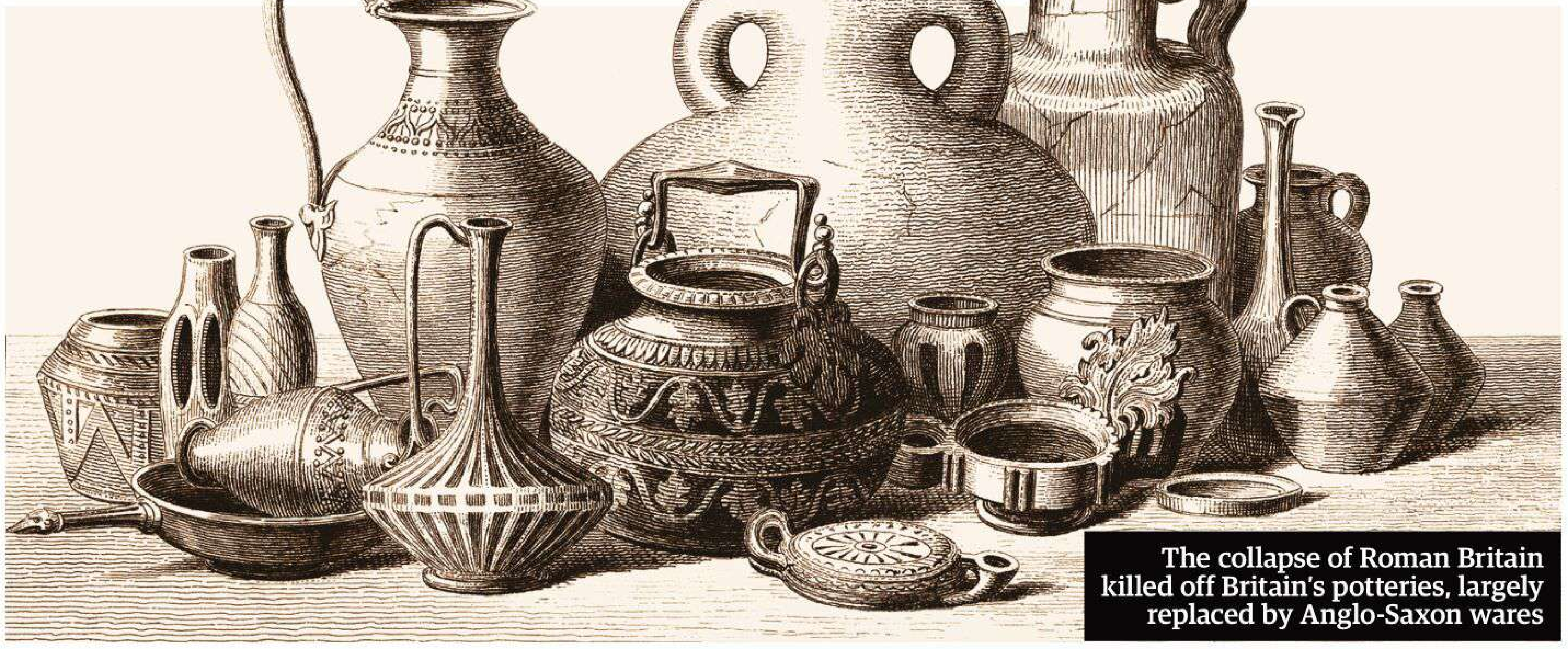
While in 600 there were numerous Anglo-Saxon kingdoms scattered across Britain, two centuries later just five remained. These had grown larger by engulfing their weaker neighbours. By the mid-9th century, the West Saxon House had become preeminent, with a lineage culminating in Alfred, king of Wessex, being recognised as Alfred the Great, king of the Anglo-Saxons. After the fall of Rome, for a millennium various leaders, from Charlemagne to Ivan the Great, would claim Roman descent, but the English never did; theirs was a new tradition – one built not upon the shoulders, but the ashes of giants.



Ambrosius Aurelianus, described as a Roman, united the Britons, halting the Anglo-Saxon advance for half a century



The Angles, Saxons and Jutes had little trouble subjugating most of Britain, laying waste to those who stood in their way



The collapse of Roman Britain killed off Britain's potteries, largely replaced by Anglo-Saxon wares

The Anglo-Saxons replaced Romano-Briton stone buildings with those made of timber

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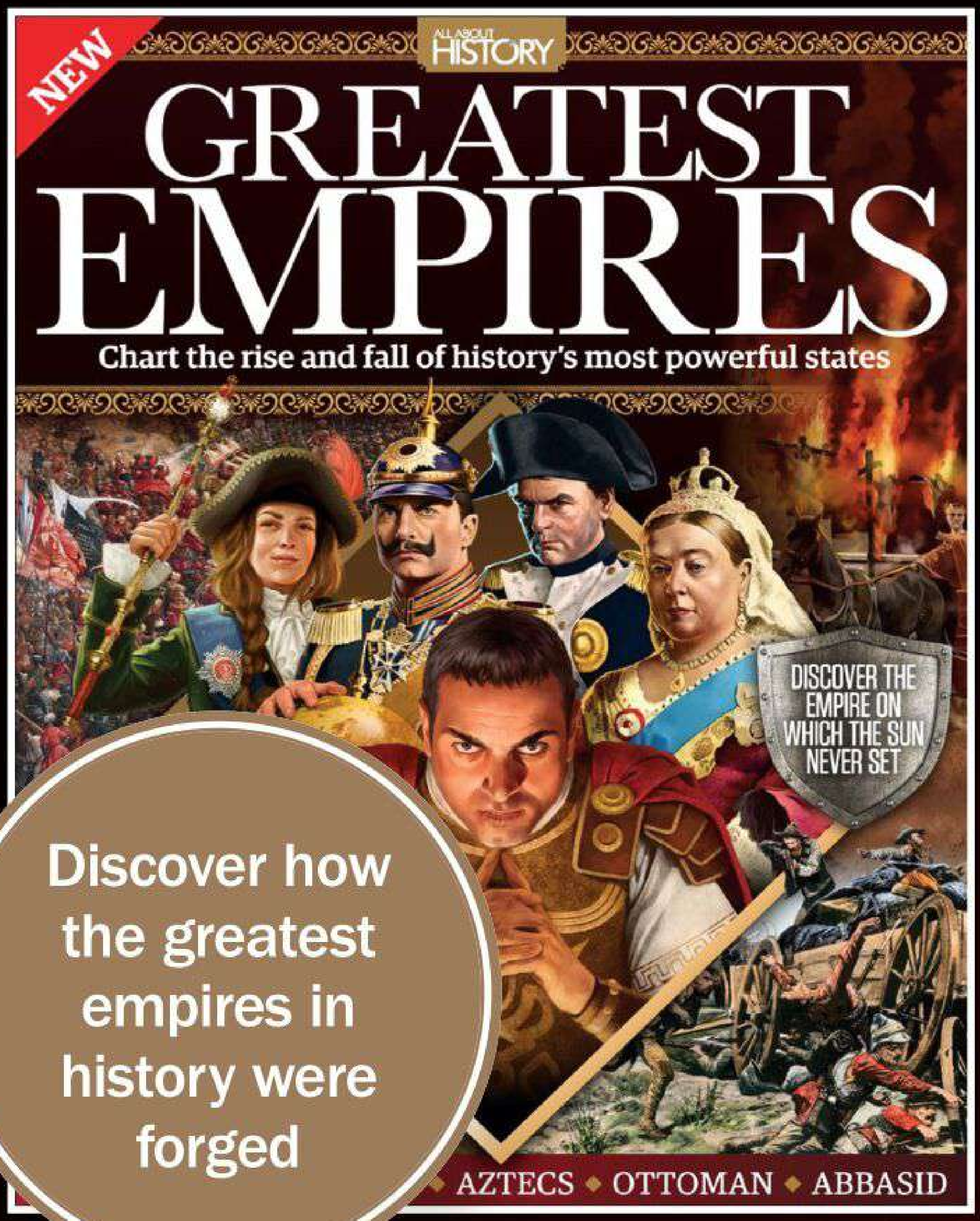

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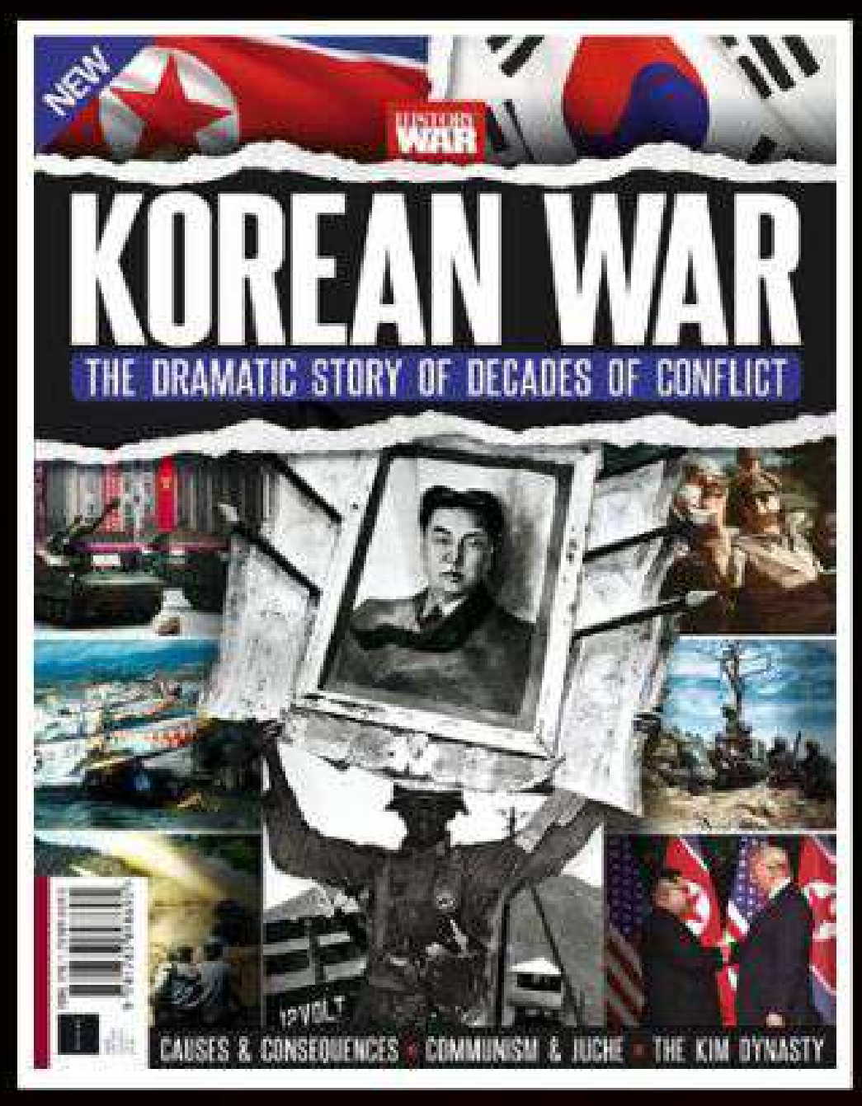

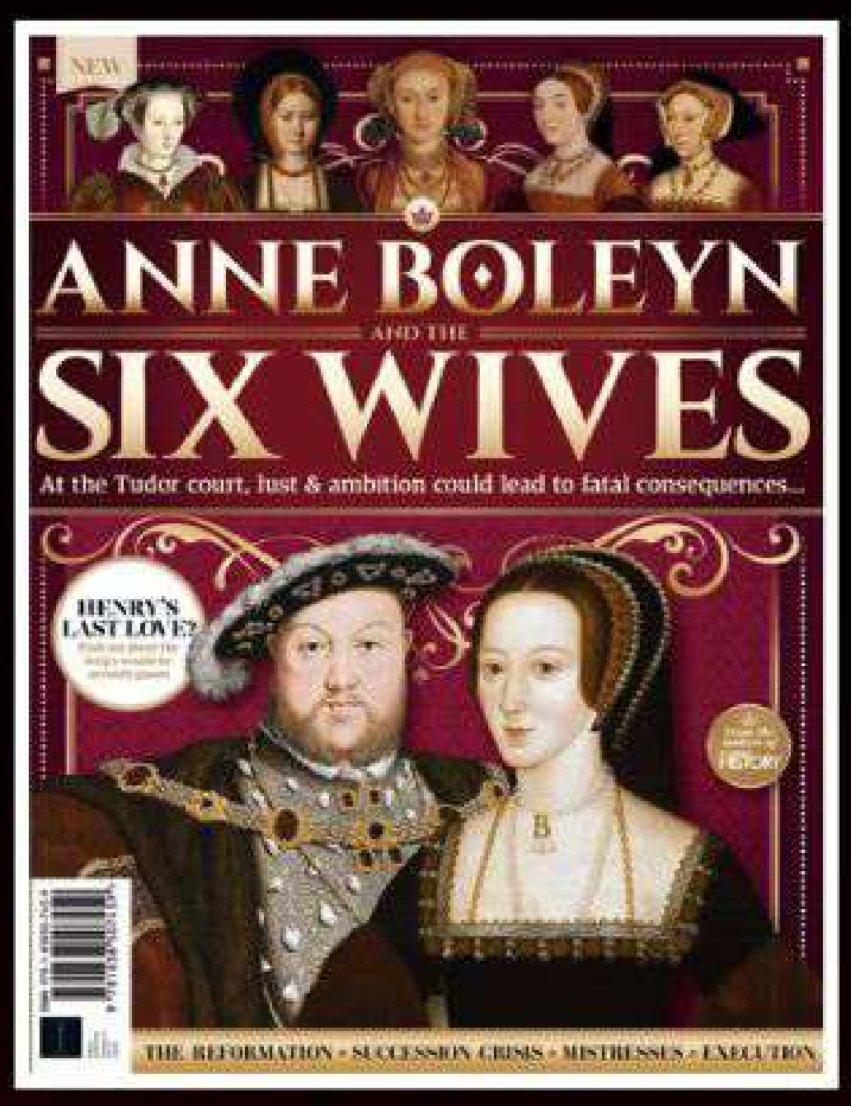

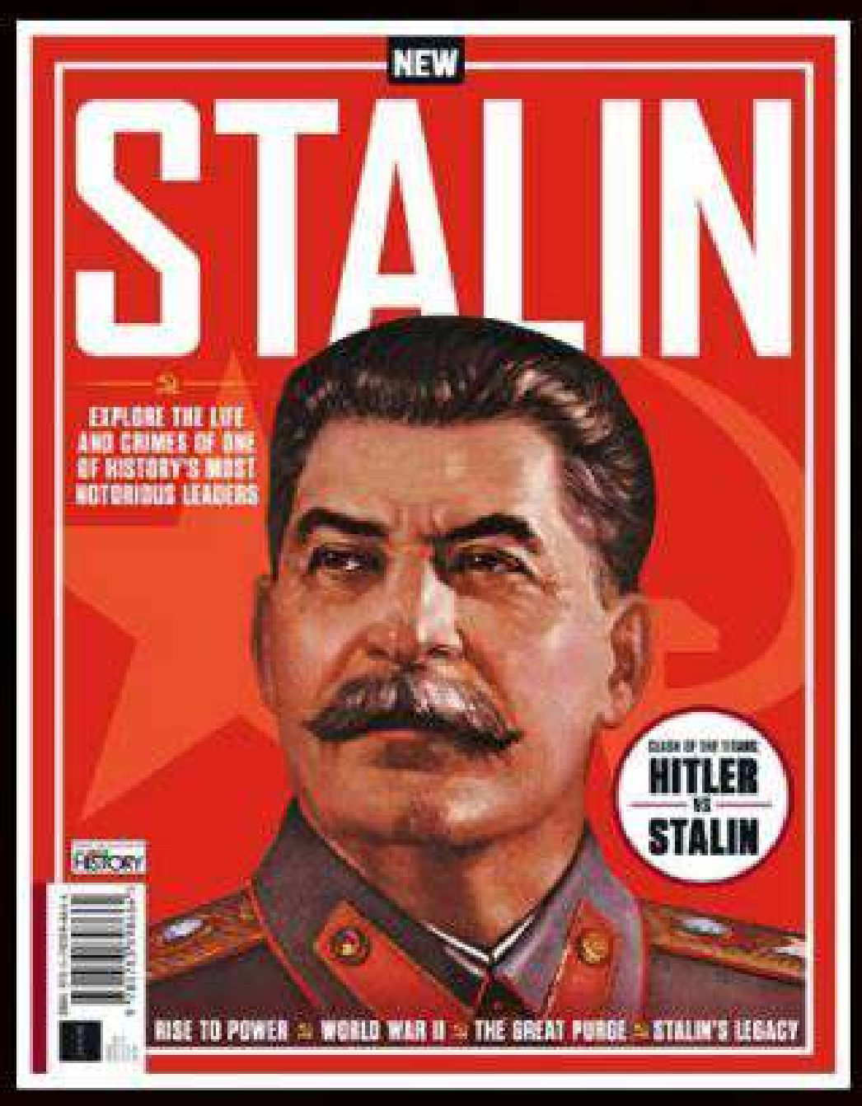

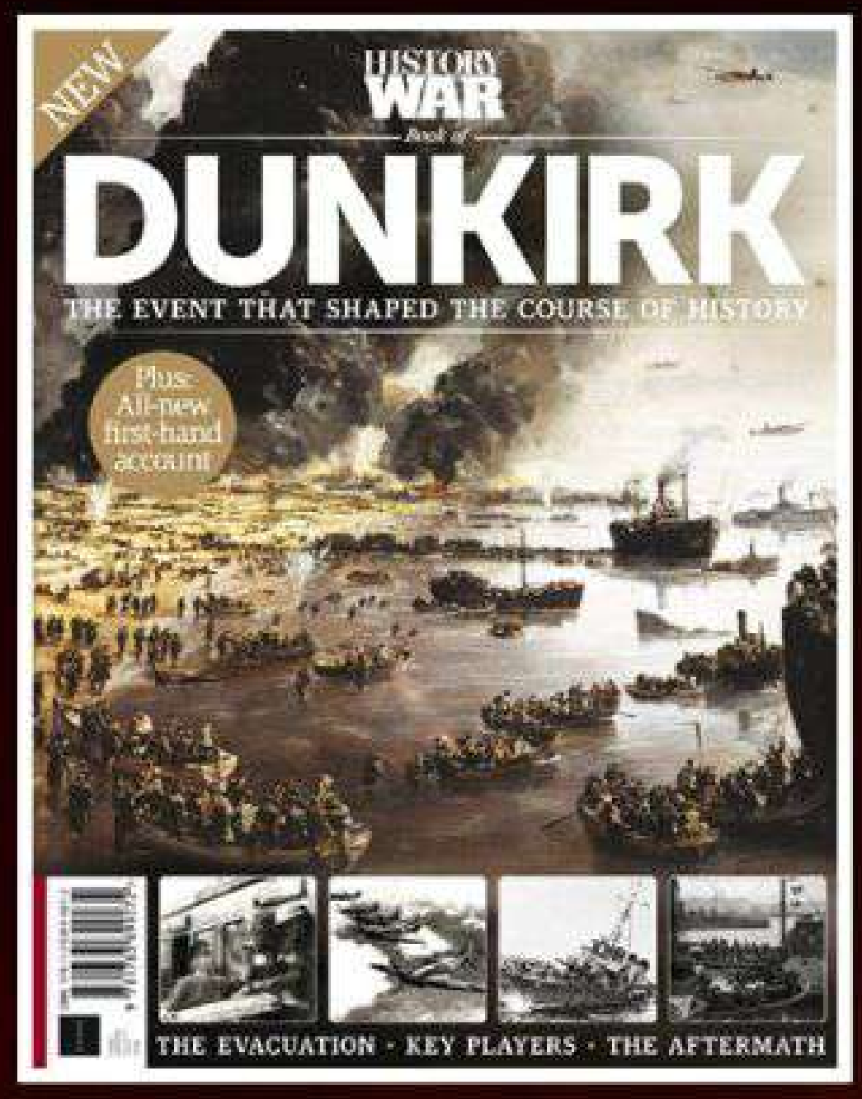

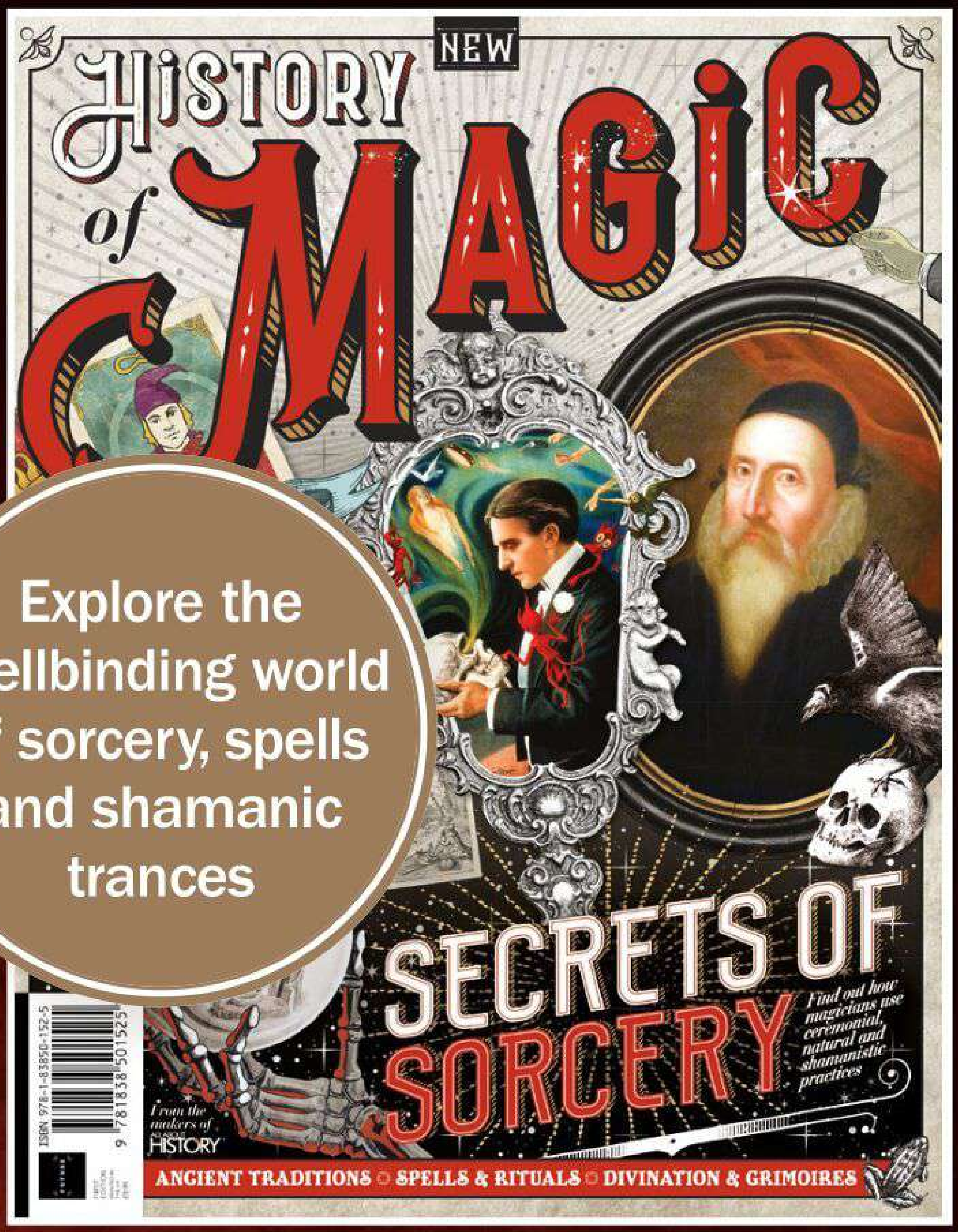

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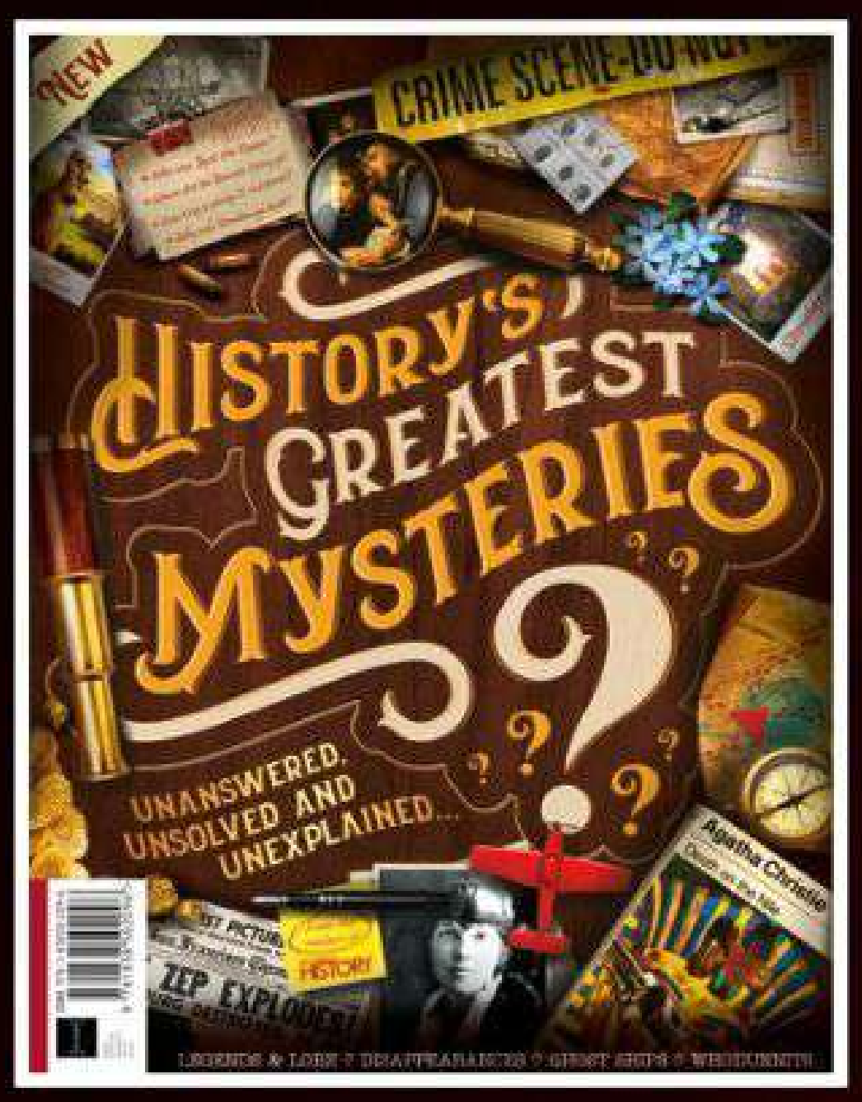

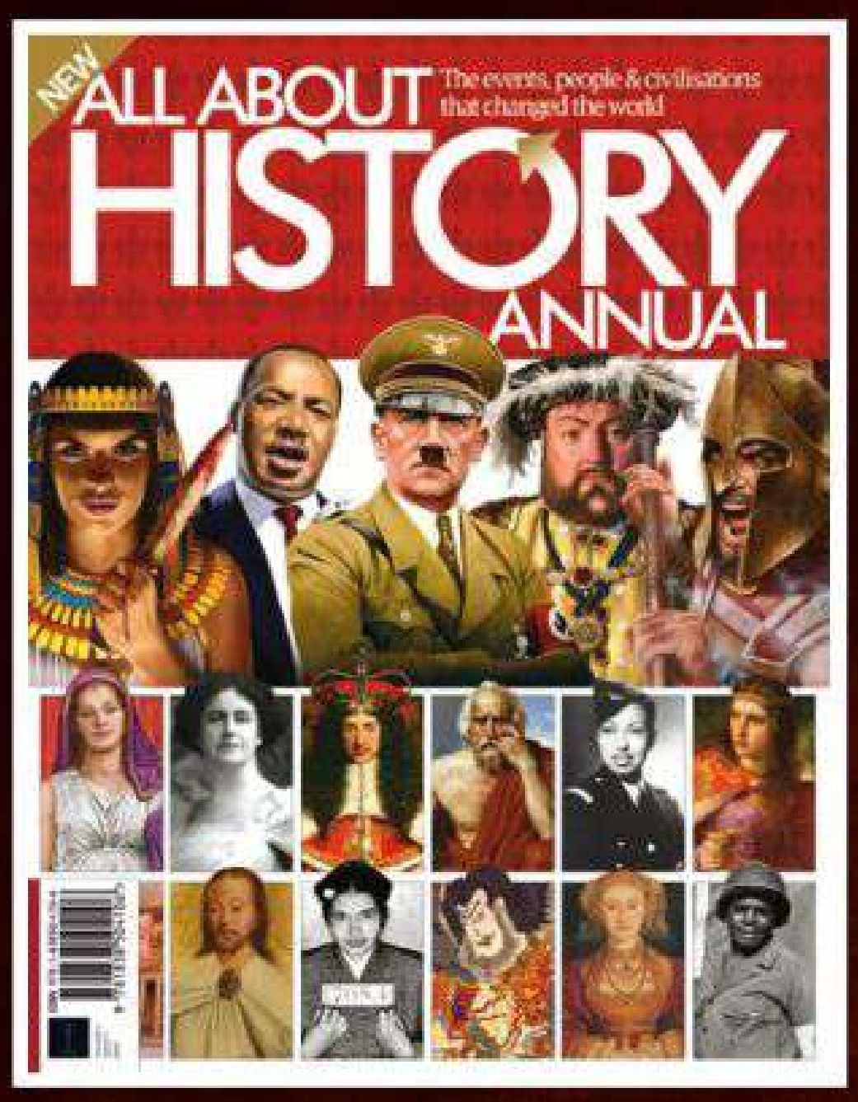

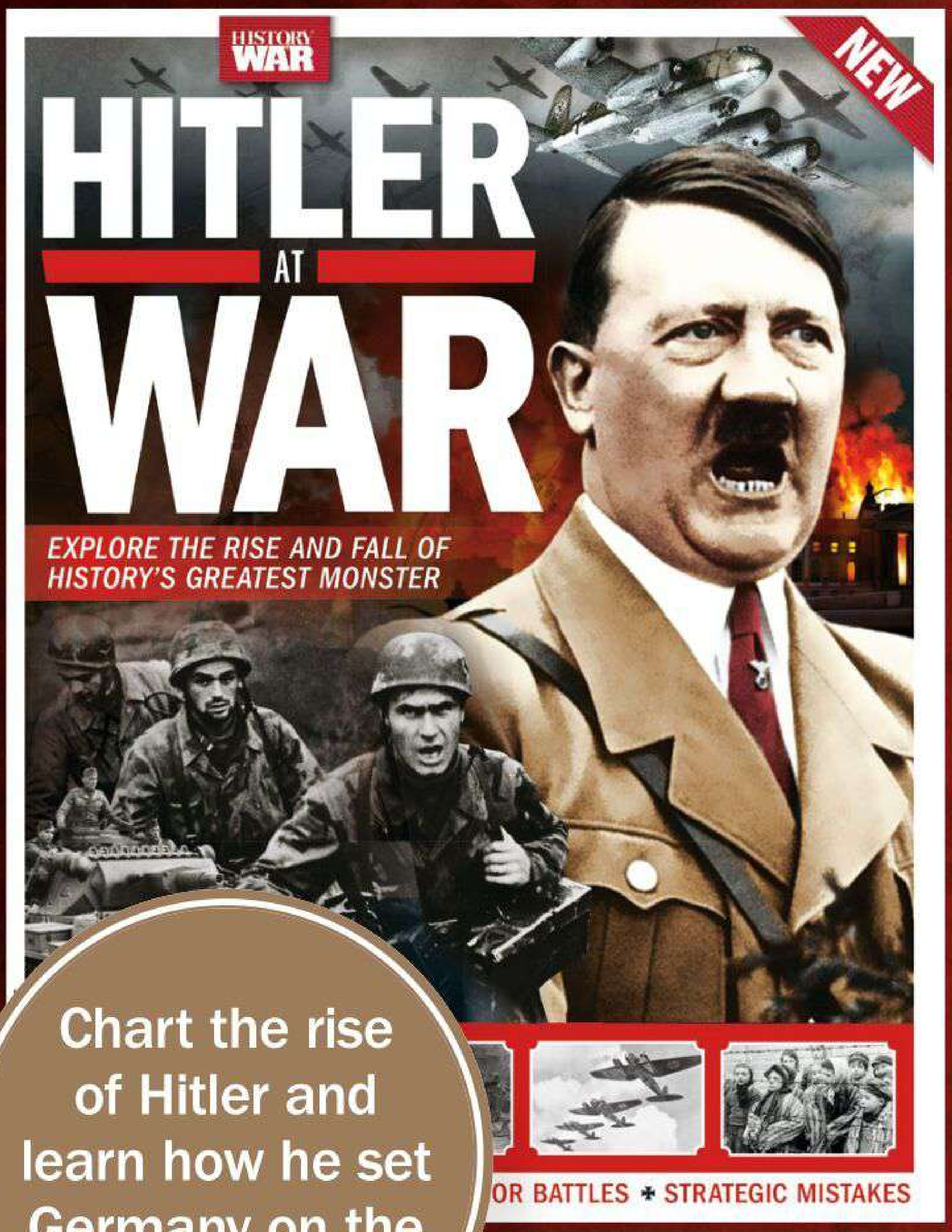

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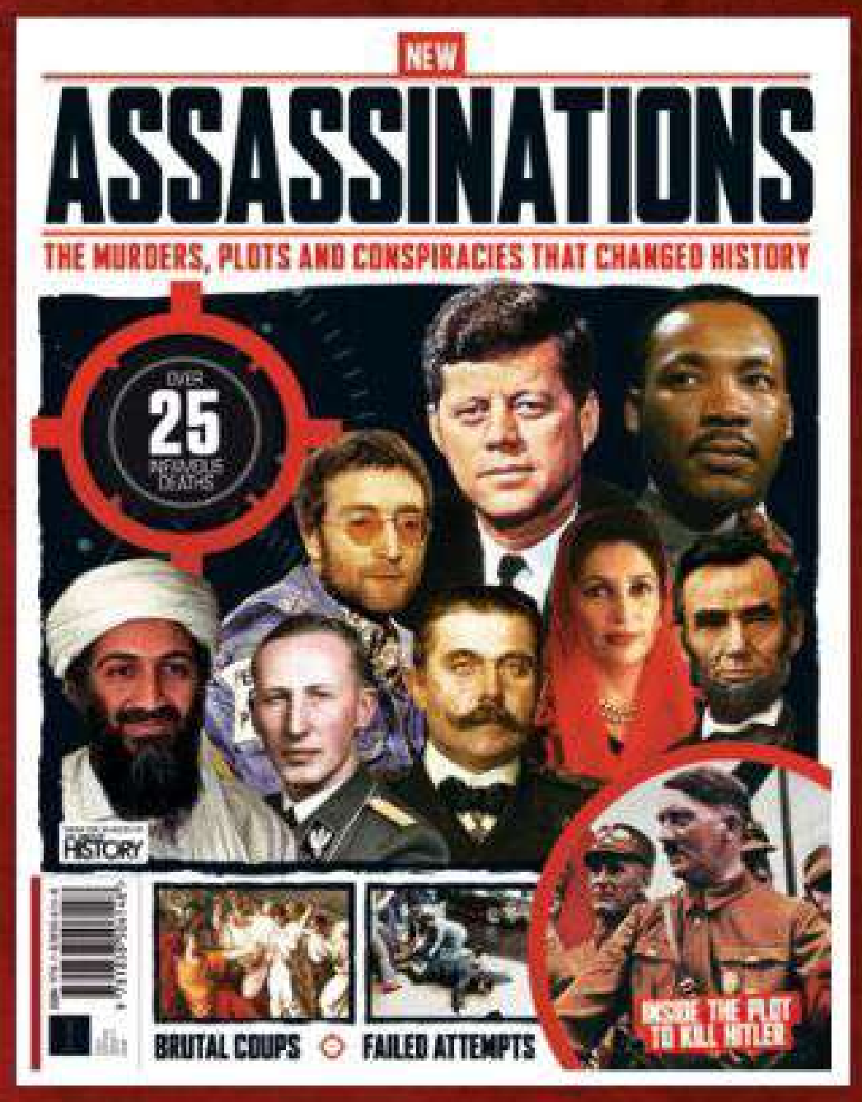

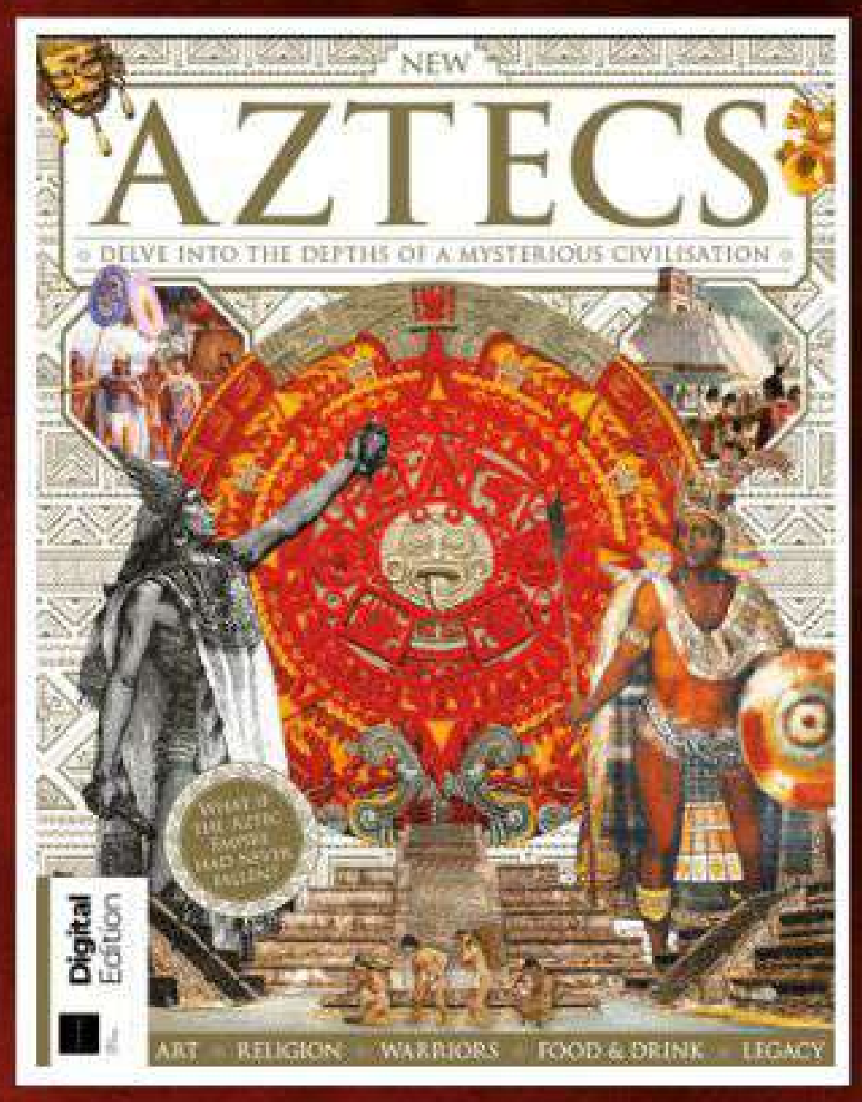

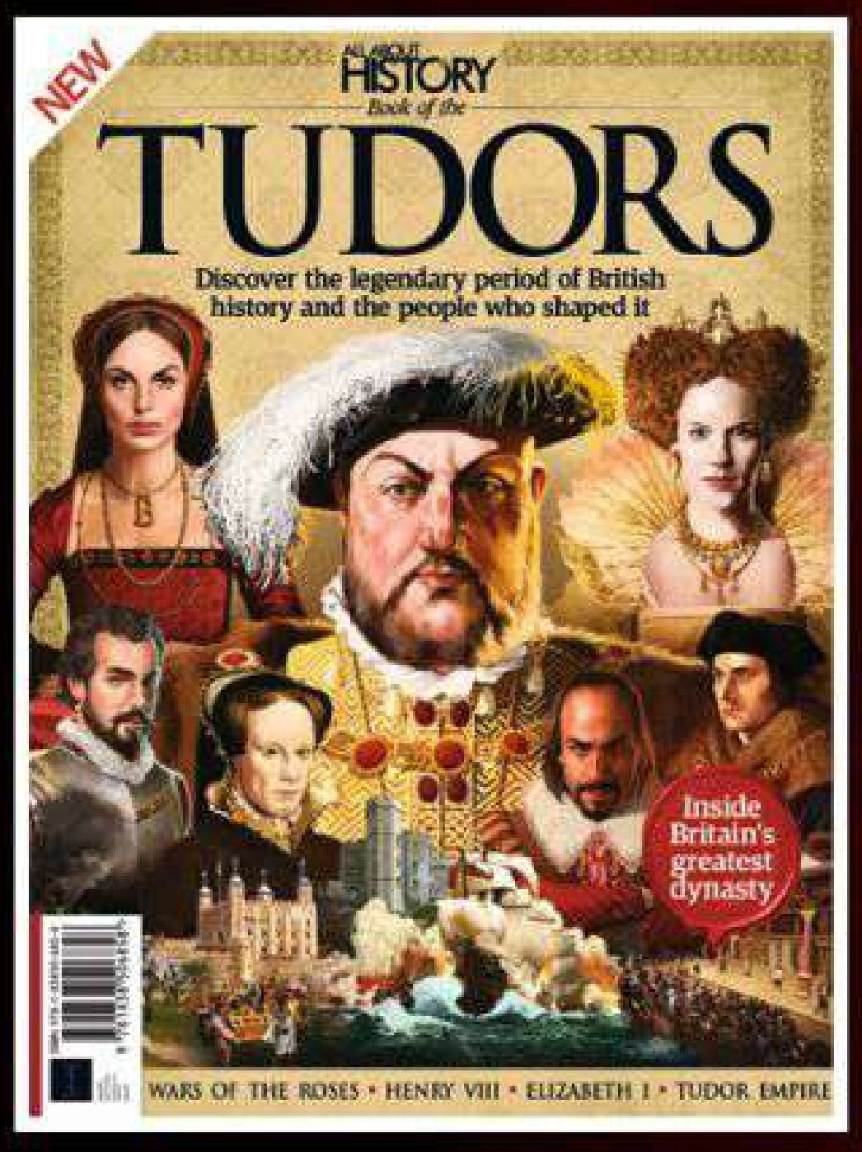

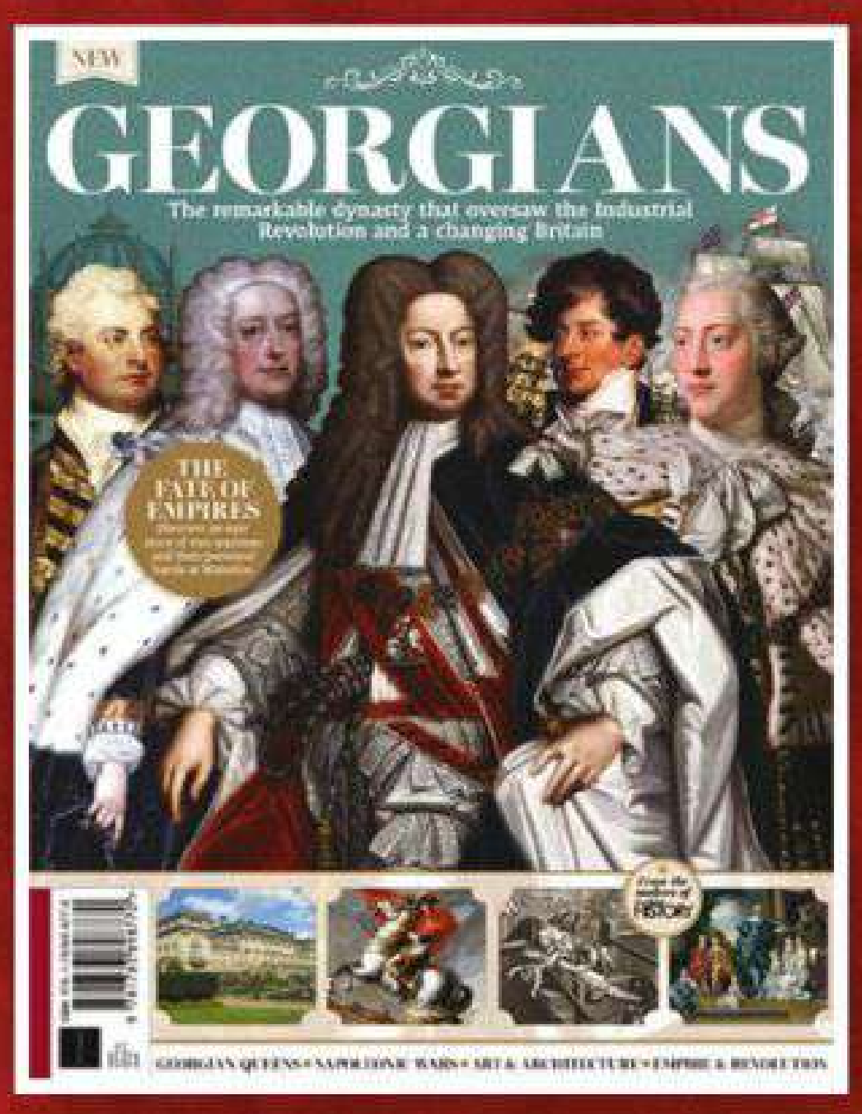

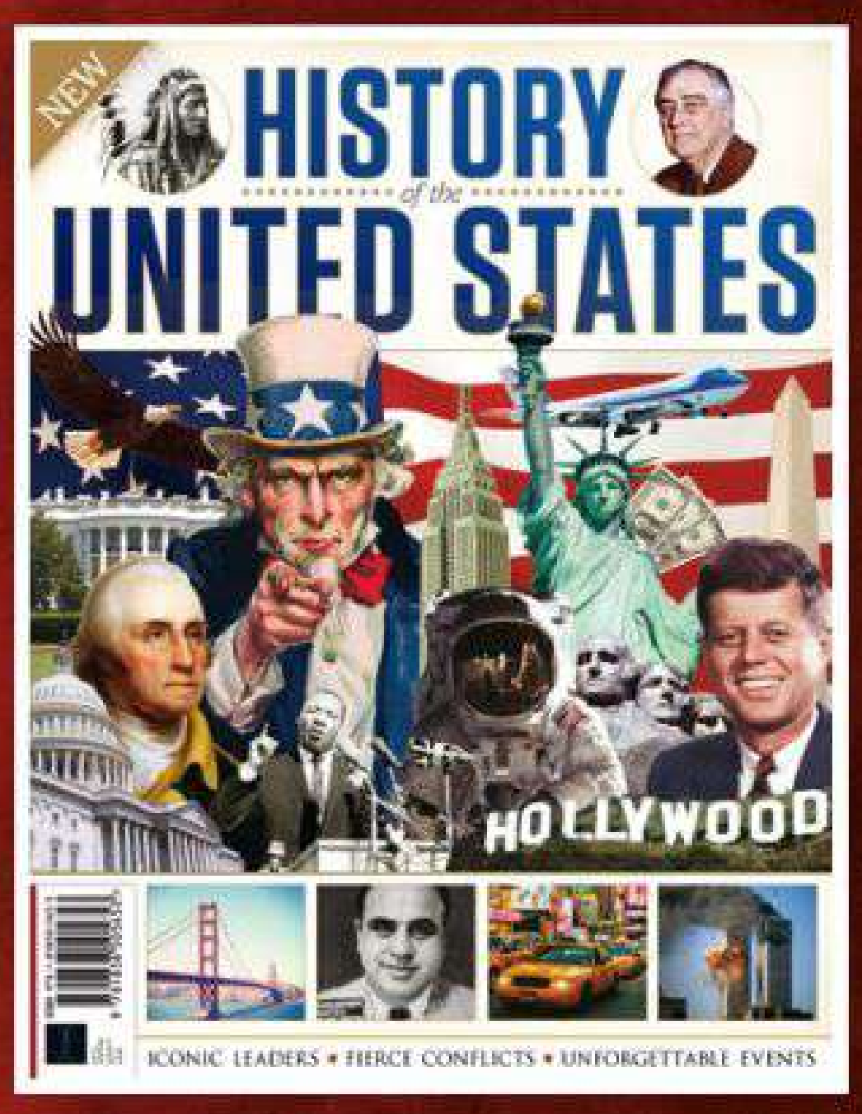

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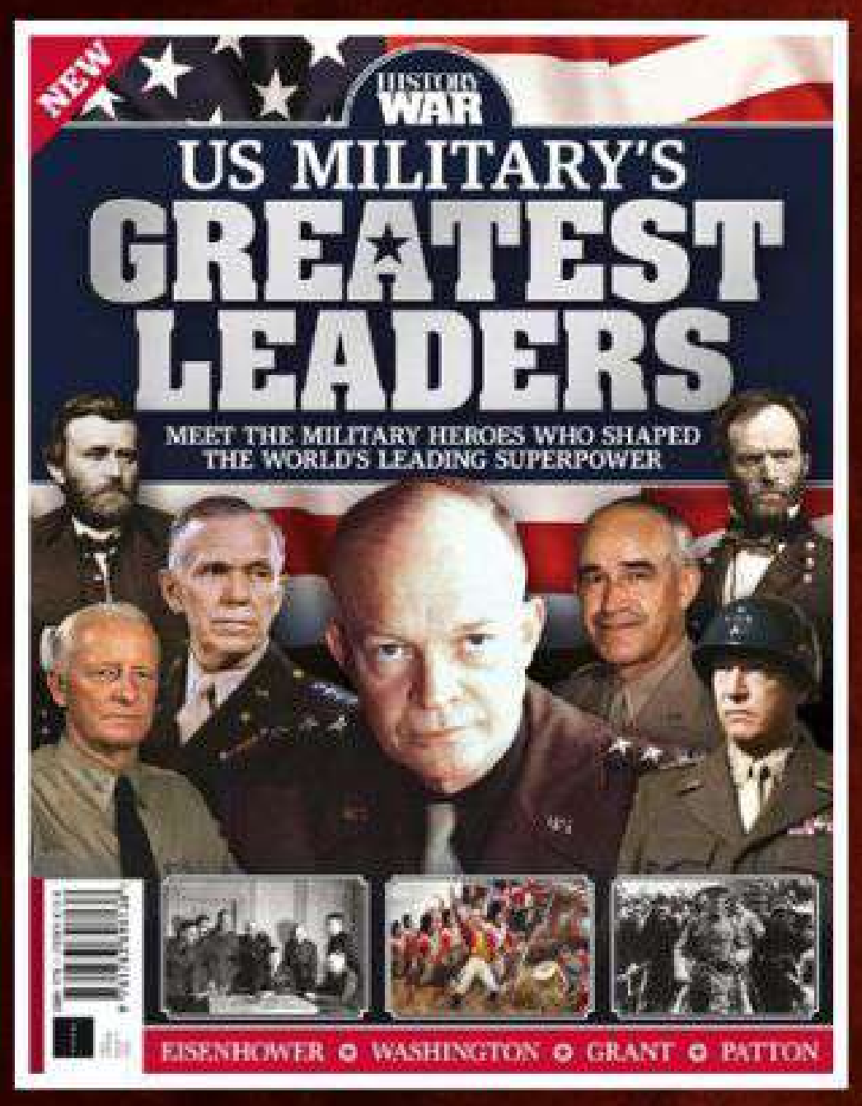
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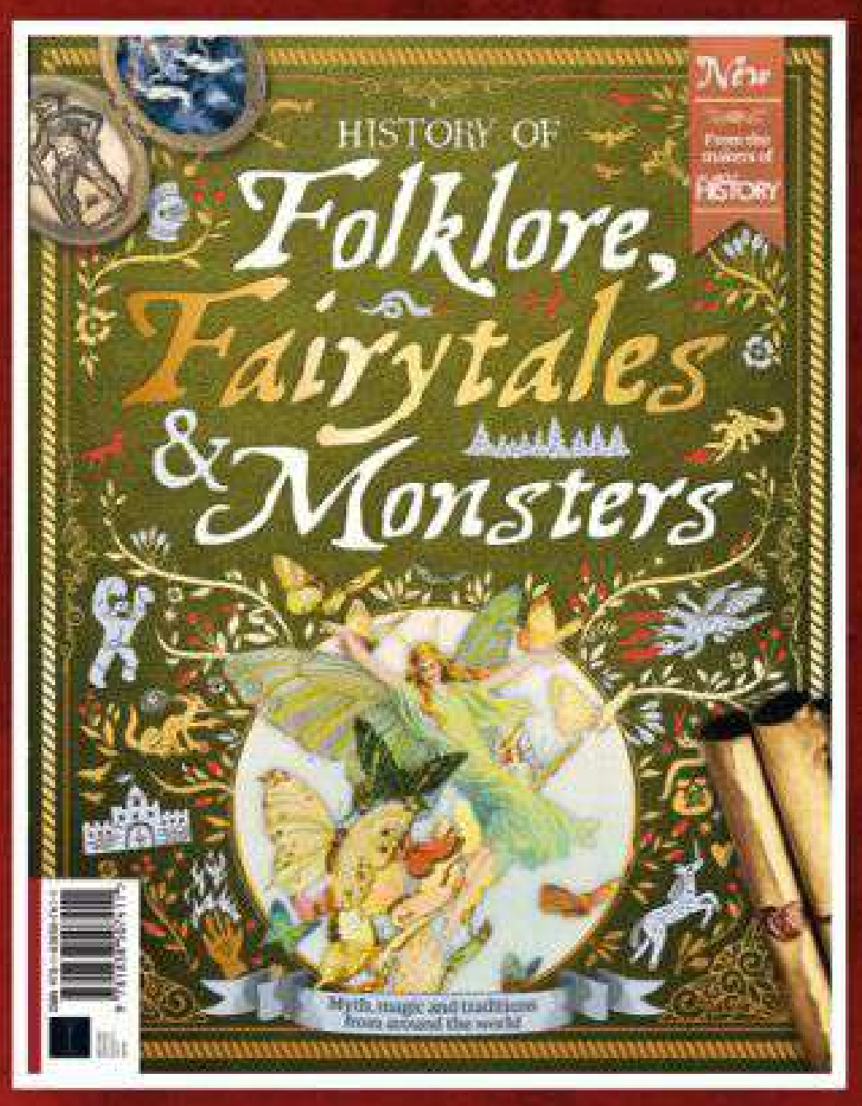
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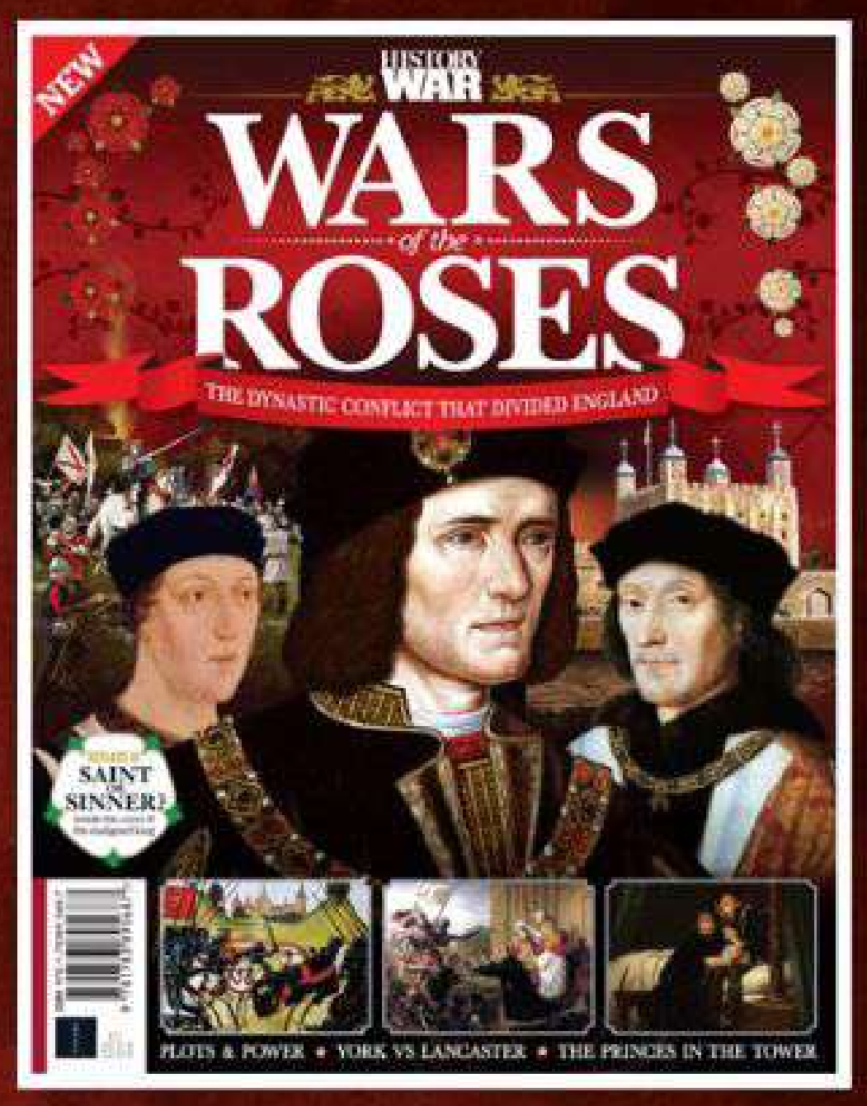
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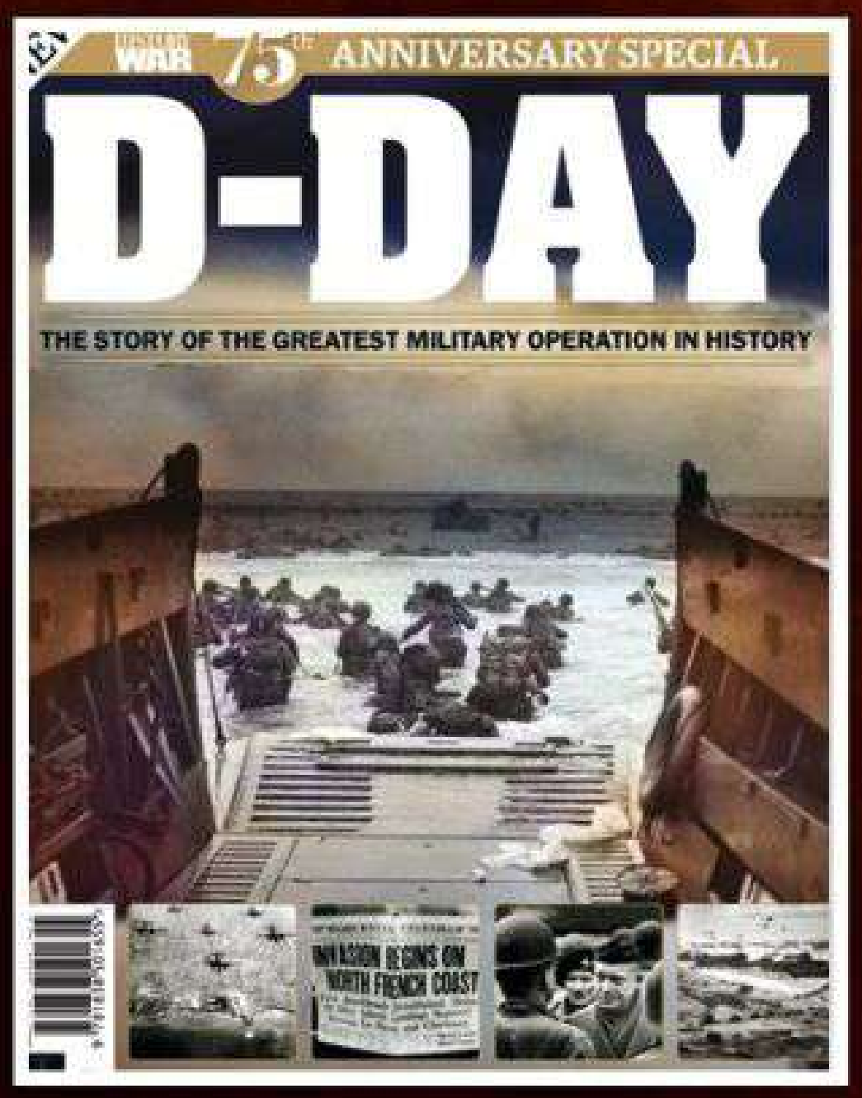
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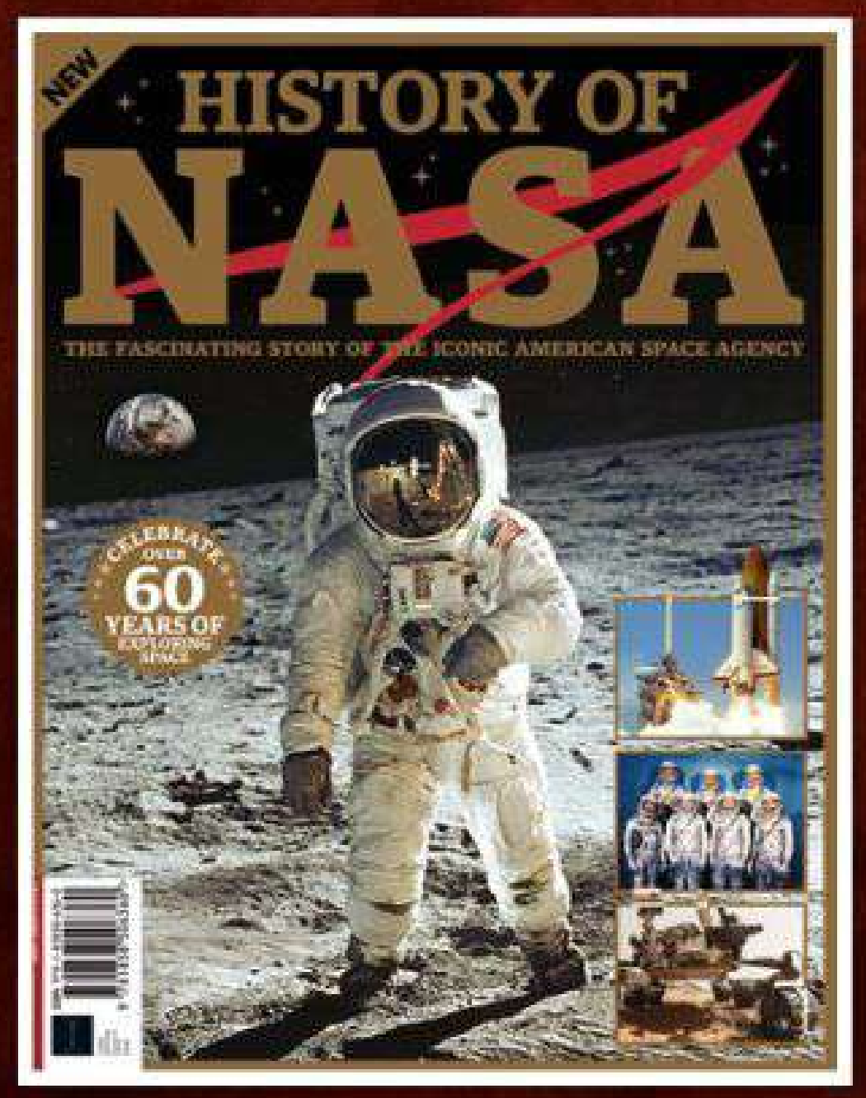
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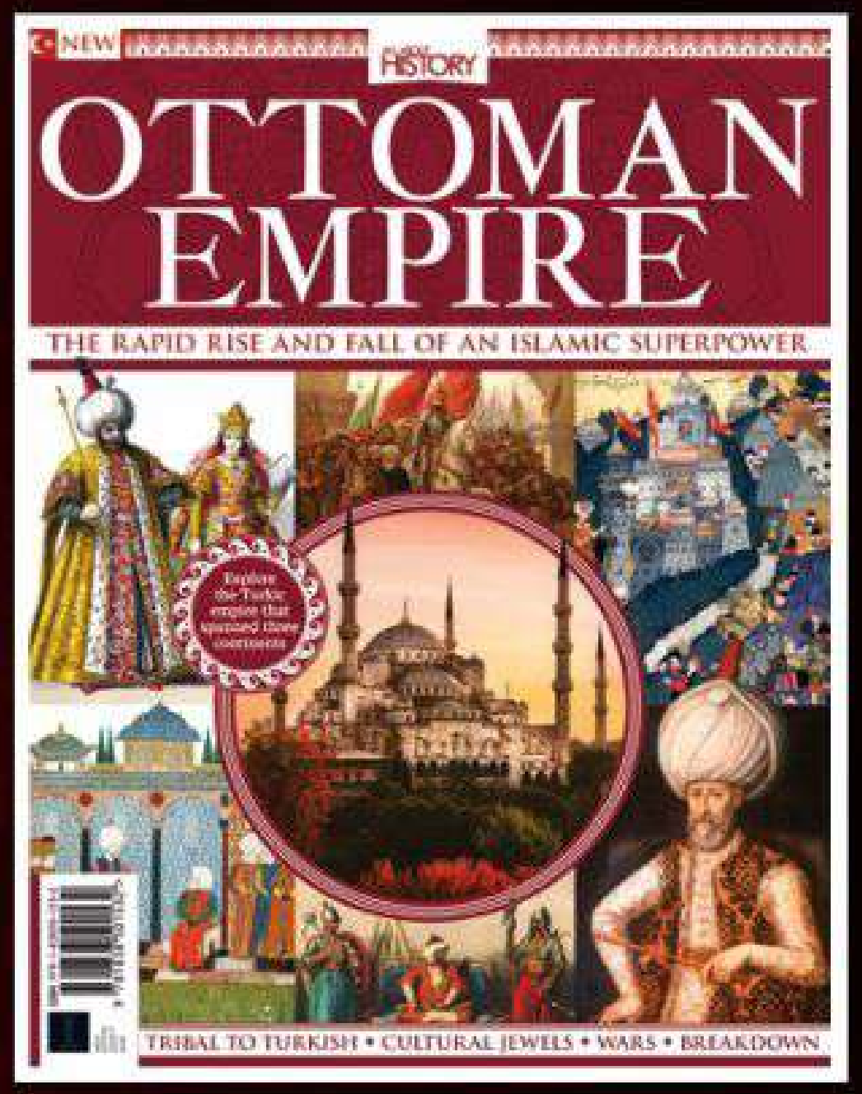
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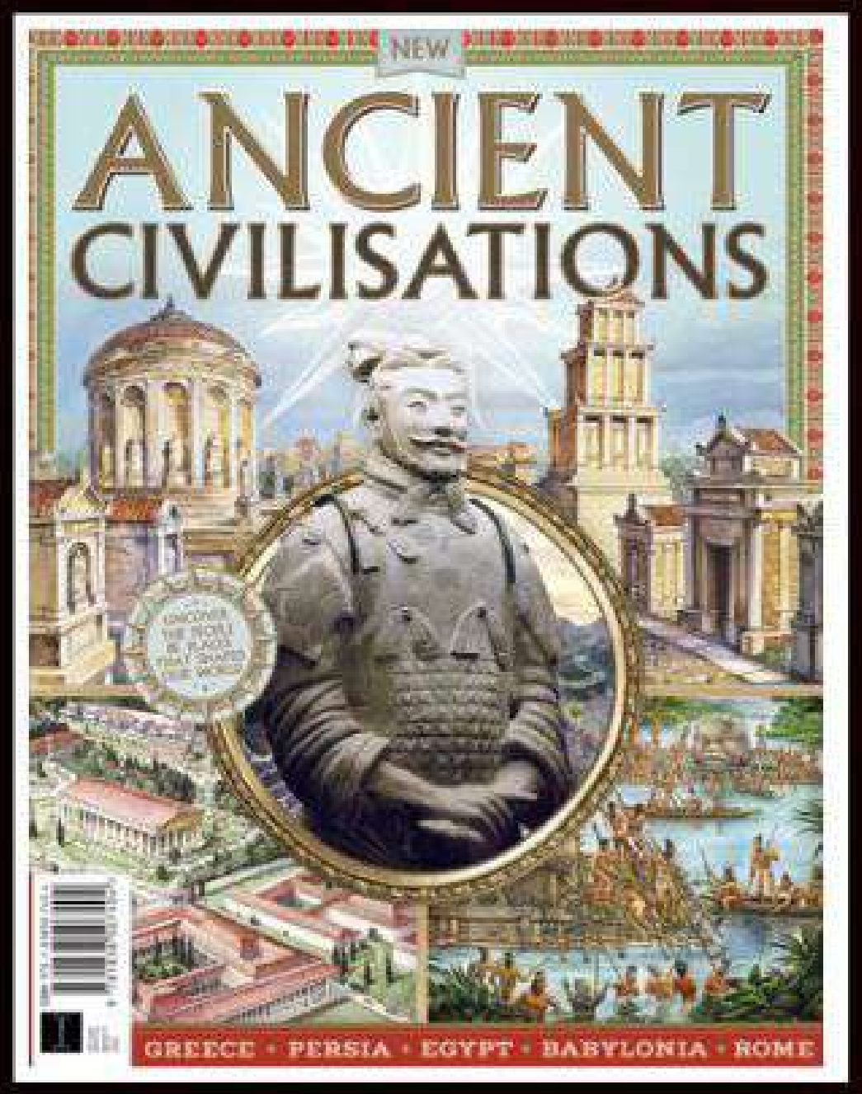
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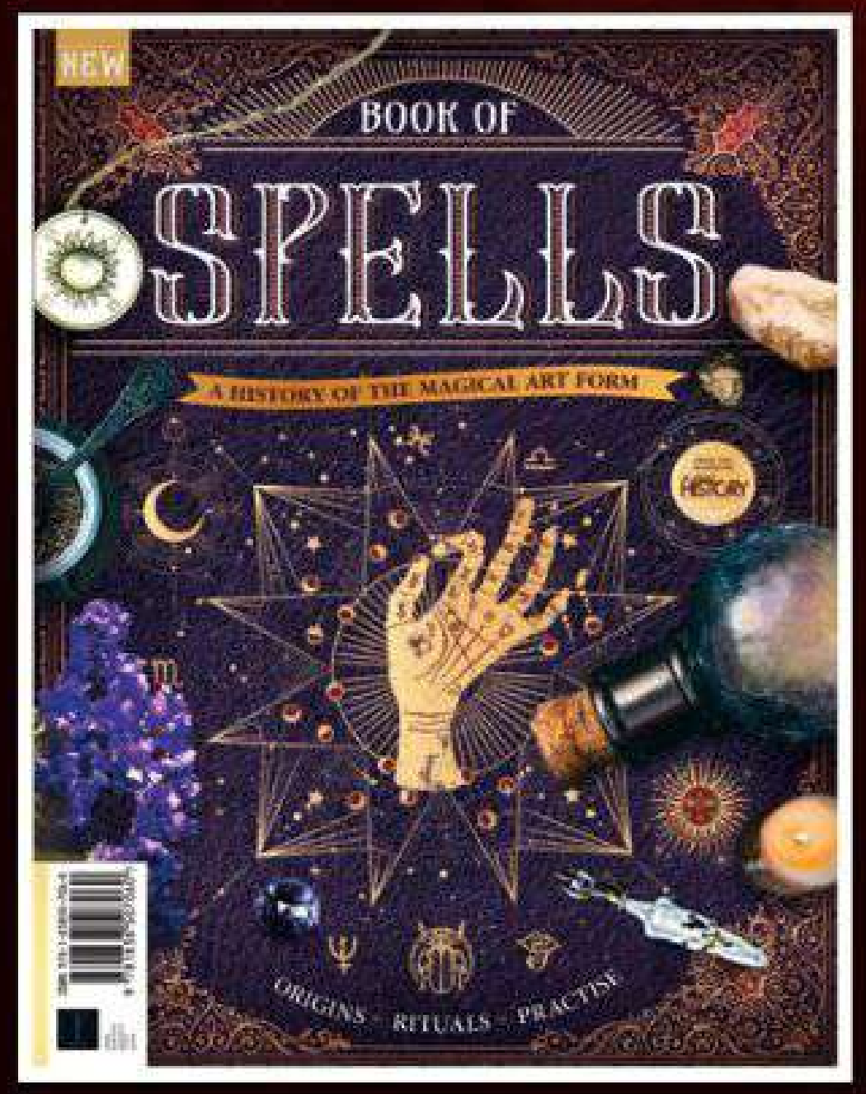
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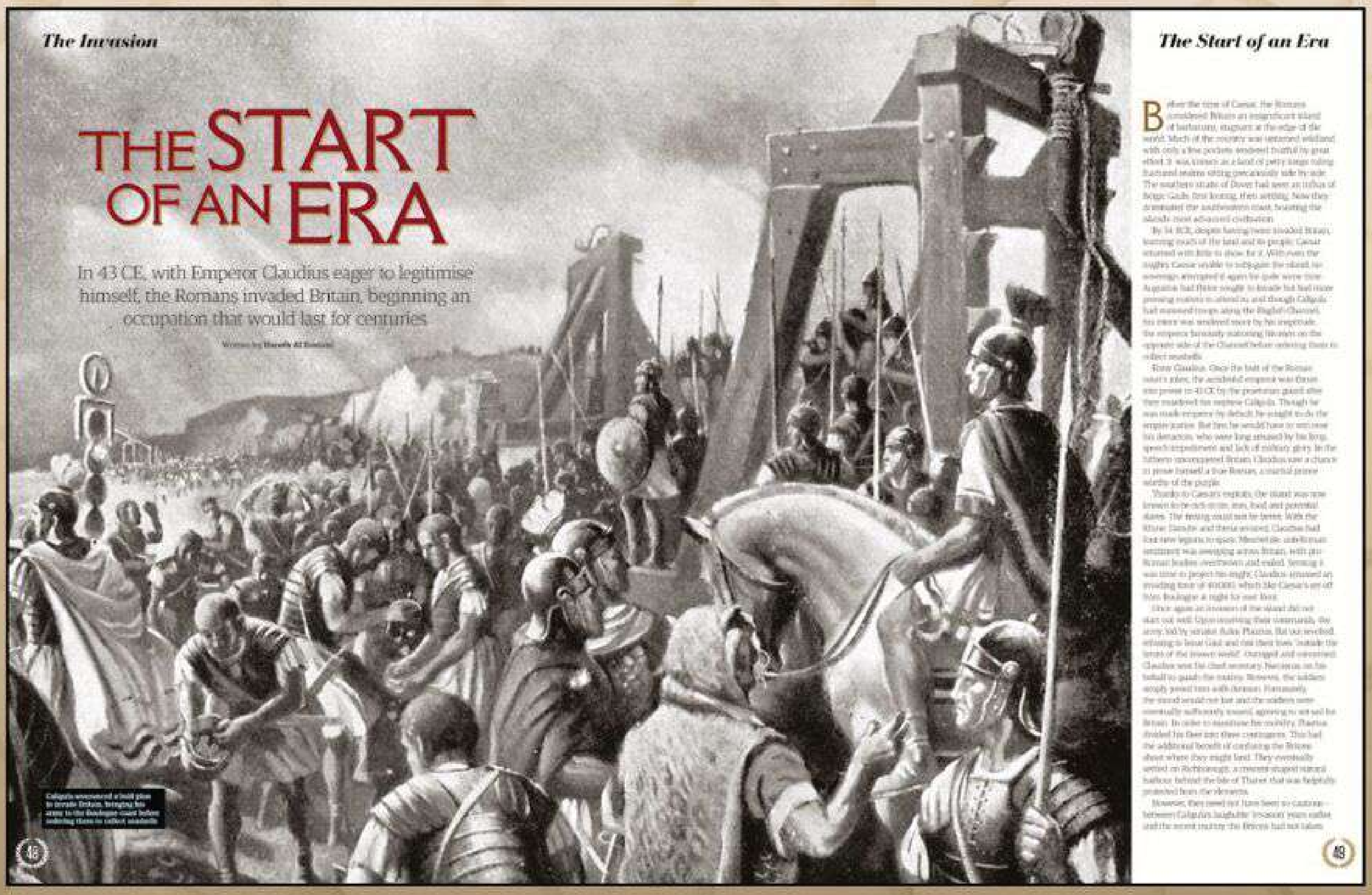
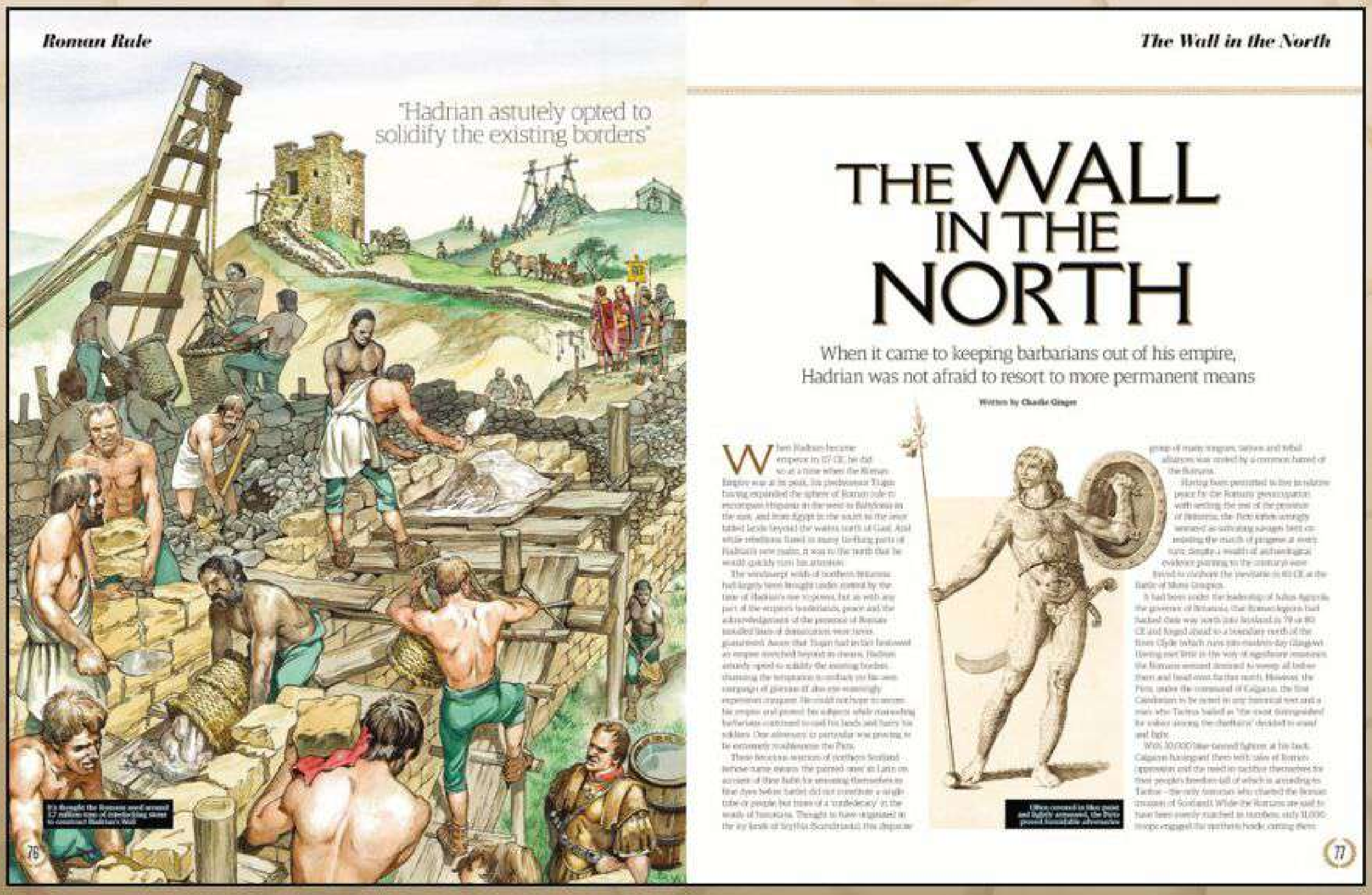

The Invasion

The Start of an Era

THE START OF AN ERA

In 43 CE, with Emperor Claudius eager to legitimise himself, the Romans invaded Britain, beginning an occupation that would last for centuries

Find out how the Romans finally managed to conquer Britain in 43 CE


Roman Rule

The Wall in the North

"Hadrian astutely opted to solidify the existing borders"

THE WALL IN THE NORTH

When it came to keeping barbarians out of his empire, Hadrian was not afraid to resort to more permanent means

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Roman Rule

Key Cities of Roman Britain

From Eboracum in the north to Dubris in the south, the Romans constructed many settlements in Britain that still stand today

KEY CITIES OF ROMAN BRITAIN

ROMAN LONDON C.200 CE

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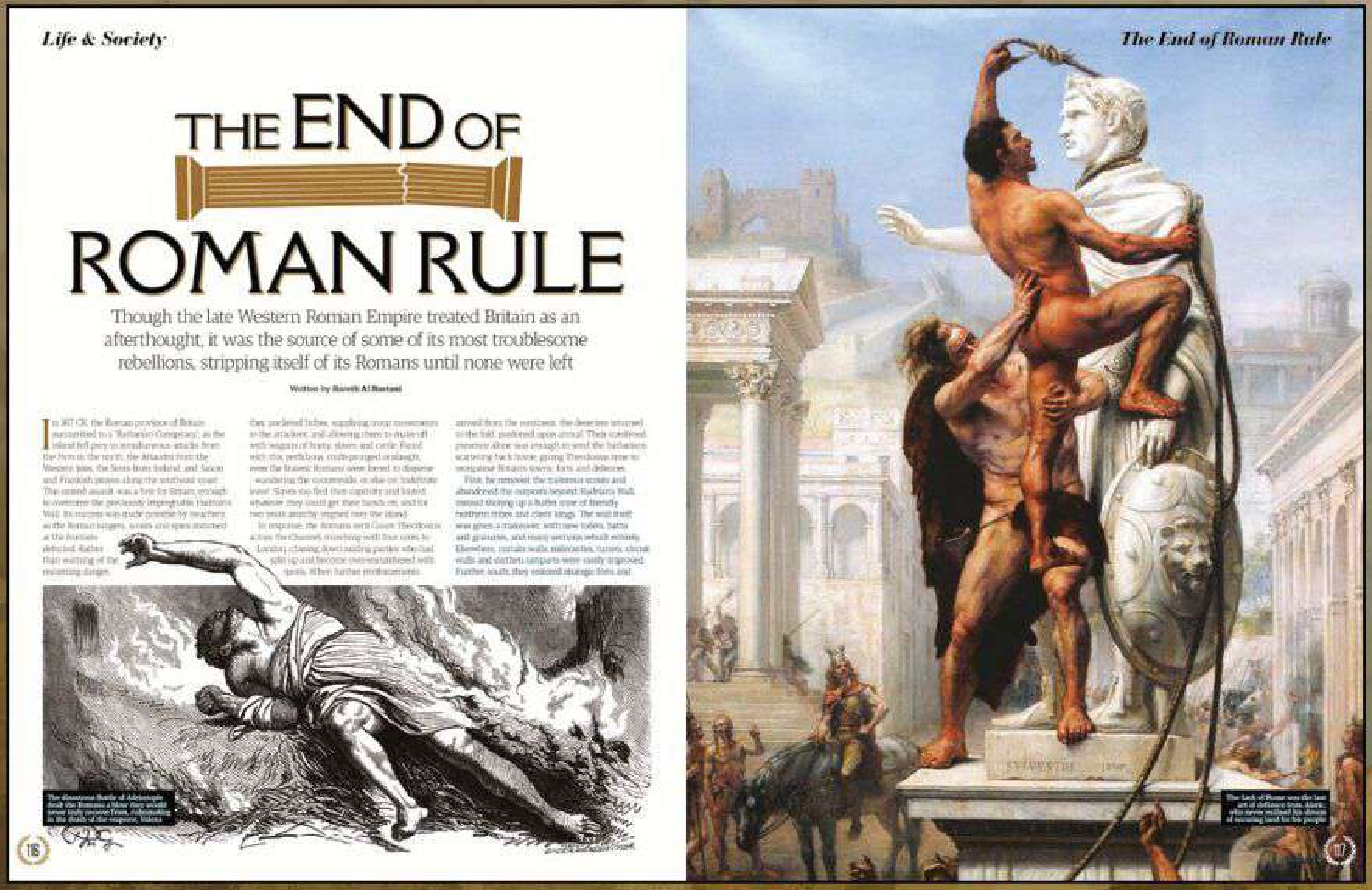
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The End of Roman Rule

THE END OF ROMAN RULE

Though the late Western Roman Empire treated Britain as an afterthought, it was the source of some of its most troublesome rebellions, stripping itself of its Romans until none were left

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